PRESENTED

TO

# MISS GOODALL

BY THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

INDIAN FEMALE NORMAL SCHOOL

AND INSTRUCTION SOCIETY.

1882.

# THE LIFE AND WORDS OF CHRIST.

BY

CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH THE BIBLE," ETC.

"THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN."
—JOHN i. 4.

VOLUME II.

*NEW EDITION.*

LONDON:
HODDER AND STOUGHTON,
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1883.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

# CONTENTS.

# THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### CAPERNAUM.



THE final "call" addressed to Peter and his brother, and to James and John, at the Lake of Galilee, apparently insignificant as an event, proved to have been, in reality, one of the turning points in the history of the world. The "call" of Abraham had given the world, as an everlasting inheritance, the grand truth of a Living Personal God; that of Moses had created a nation, in which the active government of human affairs by one God was to be illustrated, and His will made known directly to mankind; but that of the poor Galilæan fishermen was the foundation of a society, for which all that had preceded it was only the preparation; a society in which all that was merely outward and temporary in the relations of God to man, should be laid aside, and all that was imperfect and material replaced by the perfect, spiritual, and abiding. The true theocracy, towards which mankind had been slowly advancing, through ages, had received its first overt establishment, when Peter heard, on his knees, the summons of Jesus to follow Him, and had, with the others, at once, from the heart, obeyed. Henceforth, it only remained to extend the kingdom thus founded, by winning the consciences of men to the same devotion, by the announcement of the Fatherhood of God; the need of seeking His favour by repentance; and faith in His divine Son, leading to a holy life, of which that of Jesus, as the Saviour-Messiah, was the realized ideal.

CHAP. XXXIII.

From the shores of the Lake, Christ went to the house of Peter, accepting his invitation to share his hospitality.

The little town itself, with its two or three thousand inhibitants, was surrounded by a wall, and lay partly along the shore; some of the houses close to the water; others with a garden between it and them. The black lava, or basalt, of which all were built, was universally whitewashed, so that the town was seen to fine effect, from a distance, through the green of its numerous trees and gardens. Peter's household consisted of his wife, and her mother—doubtless a widow—whom his kindly nature had brought to this second home, Andrew, his brother, and, now, of Jesus, his guest. James and John, likely, still lived with their father, in Capernaum, and the whole four still followed their calling in the intervals of attending their new Master. [a]

It appears to have been on a Friday that Jesus summoned Peter and his companions.[1] The day passed, doubtless, in further work for the kingdom. As the sun set, the beginning of the Sabbath was announced by three blasts of a trumpet, from the roof of the spacious synagogue of the town, which the devout commandant of the garrison, though not a Jew, had built for the people. The first blast warned the peasants, in the far-stretching vineyards and gardens, to cease their toil; the second was the signal for the townsfolks to close their business for the week, and the third, for all to kindle the holy Sabbath light, which was to burn till the sacred day was past.[2] It was the early spring, and the days were still short, for even in summer it is hardly morning twilight, in Palestine, at four, and the light is gone by eight.[3] Jesus did not, however, go that night to Peter's house, but spent the hours in solitary devotion.[b] We can fancy, from what is elsewhere told us, that the day closed while He still spoke to a listening crowd, under some palm-tree, or by the wayside. As the moon rose beyond the hills, on the other side of the Lake, He would dismiss His hearers, with words of comfort, and a greeting of peace, and then turn to the silent hills behind, to be alone with His Heavenly Father. On their lonely heights, the noise of men lay far beneath Him, and He could find rest, after

[1] Ewald, Geschichte, v. 365.

[2] Talmud: quoted by Sepp, ii. 253.

[3] Tag, in Winer.

the toils of the day. A wide panorama of land and water stretched away on all sides, in the white moonlight. He was Himself its centre, and gazed on it with inexpressible sympathy and emotion. We can imagine Him, spreading out His arms, as if to take it all to His heart, and then prostrating Himself, as it were with it, before God, to intercede for it with the Eternal; His brow touching the earth in lowly abasement, while He pleaded for man as His friend and brother, in words of infinite love and tenderness. "Rising, erelong, in strong emotion, it would seem as if He held up the world in His lifted hands, to offer it to His Father. He spoke, was silent, then spoke again. His prayer was holy inter-communion with God. At first low, and almost in a whisper, His voice gradually became loud and joyous, till it echoed back from the rocks around Him. Thus the night passed, till morning broke and found Him, once more prostrate as if overcome, in silent devotion, but the dawn of day was the signal for His rising, and passing down again to the abodes of men."[4]

[4] Ein Tag in Capernaum, 138.

The morning service in the synagogue began at nine, and as the news of the great Rabbi being in the neighbourhood had spread, every one strove to attend, in hopes of seeing Him. Women came to it by back streets, as was required of them; the men, with slow Sabbath steps, gathered in great numbers. The elders had taken their seats, and the Reader had recited the Eighteen Prayers—the congregation answering with their Amen,—for though the prayers might be abridged on other days, they could not be shortened on the Sabbath.[5] The first lesson for the day followed, the people rising and turning reverently towards the Shrine, and chanting the words after the Reader. Another lesson then followed, and the Reader, at its close, called on Jesus, as a Rabbi present in the congregation, to speak from it to the people.

[5] Talmud, in Sepp ii. 253.

His words must have sounded strangely new and attractive, for, apart from their vividness and force, they spoke of matters of the most vital interest, which the Rabbis left wholly untouched. He had founded the kingdom of God, and now sought to build it up by realizing its conditions in the souls

CHAP. XXXIII.

of men, who should each, forthwith, be living centres of influence on others. But a course so retired, and unknown to the world at large, as that which He followed, of speaking to modest assemblies in local synagogues, makes it easy to understand how His life might be overlooked by the public writers of the age. Yet, in the little world in which He moved, the noiseless words by which He carried on His work created an intense impression. He gave old truths an unwonted freshness of presentation, and added much that sounded entirely new, on His own authority, instead of confining Himself, like the Rabbis, to lifeless repetitions of traditional commonplaces, delivered with a dread of the least deviation or originality. They claimed no power to say a word of their own; He spoke with a startling independence. Their synagogue sermons, as we see in the Book of Jubilees, were a tiresome iteration of the minutest Rabbinical rules, with a serious importance which regarded them as the basis of all moral order. The kind, and quality of wood for the altar; the infinite details of the law of tithes; the moral deadliness of the use of blood; or the indispensableness of circumcision on the eighth day, were urged with passionate zeal as momentous and fundamental truths. The morality and religion of the age had sunk thus low, and hence, the fervid words of Jesus, stirring the depths of the heart, created profound excitement in Capernaum. Men were amazed at the phenomenon of novelty, in a religious sphere so unchangeably conservative as that of the synagogue. "New teaching," said one to the other, "and with authority—not like other Rabbis. They only repeat the old: this Man takes on Him to speak without reference to the past." But if they were astonished at His teaching,[6] they were still more so at the power which He revealed in connection with it. Among those who had gone to the synagogue that morning was an unhappy man, the victim of a calamity incident apparently to the age of Christ and the Apostles only.[c] He was "possessed by a spirit of an unclean demon."[7] Our utter ignorance of the spiritual world leaves the significance of such words a mystery, though the popular idea of the time is handed down by the Rabbis.

[6] Mark 1. 22. Luke 4. 32.

[7] Luke 4. 33.

An unclean demon, in the language of Christ's day, was an evil spirit that drove the person possessed, to haunt burial-places, and other spots most unclean in the eyes of Jews. There were men who affected the black art, pretending, like the witch of Endor, to raise the dead, and, for that end, lodging in tombs, and macerating themselves with fasting, to secure the fuller aid and inspiration of such evil spirits; and others into whom the demons entered, driving them involuntarily to these dismal habitations.[8] Both classes were regarded as under the power of this order of beings, but it is not told us to which of the two the person present in the synagogue belonged.

[8] Lightfoot, ii. 141.

The service had gone on apparently without interruption till Jesus began to speak. Then, however, a paroxysm seized the unhappy man. Rising in the midst of the congregation, a wild howl of demoniacal frenzy burst from him, that must have frozen the blood of all with horror. "Ha!" yelled the demon. "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, the Nazarene? Thou comest to destroy us![d] I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of God!" Among the crowd Jesus alone remained calm. He would not have acknowledgment of His Messiahship from such a source. "Hold thy peace," said He, indignantly, "and come out of him." The spirit felt its Master, and that it must obey, but, demon to the last, threw the man down in the midst of the congregation, tearing him as it did so, and, then, with a wild howl, fled out of him. Nothing could have happened better fitted to impress the audience favourably towards Jesus. This new teaching, said they amongst themselves, is with authority. It carries its warrant with it.[e]

So startling an incident had broken up the service for the time, and Jesus left, with His four disciples, and the rest of the congregation. But His day's work of mercy had only begun. Arriving at His modest home, He found the mother of Peter's wife struck down with a violent attack of the local fever for which Capernaum had so bad a notoriety. The quantity of marshy land in the neighbourhood, especially at the entrance of the Jordan into the Lake, has made fever of a very malignant type at times the characteristic of the

locality,[9] so that the physicians would not allow Josephus, when hurt by his horse sinking in the neighbouring marsh, to sleep even a single night in Capernaum, but hurried him on to Tarichæa.[10] It was not to be thought that He who had just sent joy and healing into the heart of a stranger, would withhold His aid when a friend required it. The anxious relatives forthwith besought His help, but the gentlest hint would have sufficed. It mattered not that it was fever: He was forthwith in the chamber, bending over the sick woman, and rebuking the disease as if it had been an evil personality, He took her by the hand, doubtless with a look, and with words, which made her His for ever, and gently raising her, she found the fever gone and health and strength returned, so that she could prepare their midday meal for her household and their wondrous guest.

[9] Land and Book, 356.

[10] Vit. 72.

The strict laws of the Jewish Sabbath gave a few hours of rest to all, but the blast of the trumpet which announced its close was the signal for a renewal of the popular excitement, now increased by the rumour of a second miracle.[11] With the setting of the sun it was once more lawful to move beyond the two thousand paces of a Sabbath Day's journey, and to carry whatever burdens one pleased. Forthwith, began to gather from every street, and from the thickly sown towns and villages round, the strangest assemblage. The child led its blind father as near the enclosure of Simon's house as the throng permitted: the father came carrying the sick child; men bore the helpless in swinging hammocks; "all that had any sick, with whatever disease," brought them to the Great Healer. The whole town was in motion, and crowded before the house. What the sick of even a small town implied may be imagined. Fevers, convulsions, asthma, wasting consumption, swollen dropsy, shaking palsy, the deaf, the dumb, the brain-affected, and, besides all, "many that were possessed with devils," that last, worst, symptom of the despairing misery and dark confusion of the times.

[11] Matt. 8. 15. Mark 1. 32. Luke 4. 40.

Would He leave them as they were? They had taken it for granted that He would pity them, for was He not a Prophet of God, and was it not natural that, like Elijah or

Elisha, the greatest of the prophets, the power of God might be present to heal those who were brought to Him? Already, moreover, His characteristics had won the confidence of the simple crowd. There must have been a mysterious sympathy and goodness in His looks, and words, and even in His bearing, that seemed to beckon the wretched to Him as their friend, and that conquered all uncorrupted hearts. It had drawn His disciples from the interests of gain, to follow Him in His poverty; it melted the woman that was a sinner into tears; it softened the hard nature of publicans; and drew hundreds of weary and heavy-laden to Him for rest. Those who could, gathered wherever they might hope to find Him, and as it was this evening, those who could not come, had themselves carried into His presence. As many as could, strove to touch, if it were possible, even His clothes; others confessed aloud their sins, and owned that their illness was the punishment from God. One would not venture to ask Him to come to his house; another brought Him in that He might be, as it were, constrained to help. The blind cried out to Him from the road-side, and the woman of Canaan followed Him in spite of His hard words. When He came near, even those possessed felt His divine greatness. Trembling in every limb, they would fain have fled, but felt rooted to the spot, the evil spirits owning, in wild shrieks, the presence of One whose goodness was torment, and before whose will they must yield up their prey.

The sight of so much misery crowding for relief touched Jesus at once, and, erelong, He appeared at the open door, before the excited crowd. With a command, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him," a poor demoniac was presently in his right mind. The helpless lame stood up at the words "I say unto thee, Arise." The paralytic left his couch, at the sound of "Take up thy bed and walk." To some, He had a word of comfort, that dispelled alarm and drove off its secret cause. "Be it to thee according to thy faith." "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." "Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee," was enough to turn sorrow and pain into joy and health. Erelong He had spoken to all some word of mercy. The blind left with

CHAP. XXXIII.

their sight restored; the possessed thanked God for their restoration; the fever-stricken felt the glow of returning vigour; the dumb shouted His praises; and thus the strange crowd went off one by one, leaving the house once more in the silence of the night. No wonder the Evangelist saw in such an evening a fulfilment of the words of the prophet, "Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases."[12]

[12] From the Hebrew, not the Greek, of Isaiah 53. 4.

It was not, however, by popular excitement and mere outward healing that the kingdom of God was to be spread, but by the still and gentle influence of the Truth, working conviction in individual souls. The noisy crowd, the thronging numbers of diseased and suffering; the curiosity that ran after excitement, and the yearning for help which looked only to outward healing, troubled, and almost alarmed Him. He had come to found a Spiritual Society of men changed in heart towards God, and filled with faith in Himself as its Head; and the merely external and mostly selfish notions of the multitude, could not escape His keen eyes. His divine love and pity sighed over the bodily and mental distress around. But, as a rule, the sufferers thought only of their outward misery, in melancholy ignorance of its secret source in their own sin and guilt before God, and had all their felt wants relieved when their bodily troubles were removed.

In one aspect, indeed, these miraculous cures furthered the great purpose of Jesus. They might prove no doctrine, for mere power could not establish moral and spiritual truth. Miracles might possibly be wrought by other influences than divine, and left religious teaching to stand on its own merits, for they appealed to the senses; not, like truth, to the soul. The display of overwhelming power might seem almost to endanger, rather than promote, the higher aim of Jesus, to win those whom He addressed. It awes and repels men to find themselves in the presence of forces which they can neither resist nor understand. In nature, untutored races tremble before powers which may be used to destroy them, and seek to win their favour by the flattery of worship, surrounding even human despotism with awful attributes, before which they cower in terror.

Jesus, however, could appeal to His miraculous powers as evidences of His divine mission, and often did so. Their value lay in the grandeur they added to His character. Even in the wilderness, He had refused to exert them, under any circumstances, either for His natural wants, or for His personal ends, and He adhered to this amazing self-restraint through His whole career. It was seen from the first, that His awful powers were uniformly beneficent; that He came, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; that He used omnipotence to bless, but never to hurt. His words, His bearing, and His looks of divine love and tenderness, doubtless predisposed men to expect this, and His uniform course soon confirmed it. They saw that nothing could disturb His absolute patience, or rouse Him to vindictiveness. They heard Him endure meekly the most contemptuous sneers, the bitterest criticism, and the most rancorous hostility. No one denied His miraculous powers, though some affected to call them demoniac, in direct contradiction to their habitual exercise for the holiest ends. But they were so invariably devoted to the good of others, and so entirely held in restraint, as regarded personal ends, that men came, erelong, to treat Him with the reckless boldness of hatred, notwithstanding such awful endowment.

Round One so transcendently meek, self-interest found no motive for gathering. He who would do nothing with such possibilities, for Himself, could not be expected to do more for the personal ends of others. Hypocrisy had nothing to gain by seeking His favour. Only sincerity found Him attractive. But, on the other hand, with the uncorrupted and worthy, this characteristic gave Him unlimited moral elevation. No more sublime spectacle can be conceived than boundless power, kept in perfect control, for ends wholly unselfish and noble. Condescension wins admiration when it is only from man to man; when it showed itself in veiled omnipotence, ever ready to bless others, but never used on its own behalf, it became a divine ideal. Men saw Him clothed with power over disease, and even over death; able to cast forth spirits, or to still the sea, and yet accessible, full of sympathy, the lofty patriot, the tender friend, the

patient counsellor; shedding tears, at times, from a full heart, and ever ready with a wise and gentle word for all; so unaffected and gentle that children drew round Him with a natural instinct, and even worldly hardness and vice were softened before Him; and this contrast of transcendent power, and perfect humility, made them feel that He was indeed the Head of the Kingdom of God amongst men. The secret of His amazing success, as the founder of a new religious constitution for mankind, lay in the recognition of this perfect sacrifice of One so transcendently great, culminating in "the death of the cross."[13] It was the perfect realization, in Himself, of the life He urged on others. It implied the ideal fulfilment of all human duties, and no less so, of all divine, for the heavenly love which alone could dictate and sustain such a career, was, in itself, the most perfect transcript of the nature of God. A life in which every step showed kingly grace and divinely boundless love, condescending to the lowliest self-denial for the good of man, proclaimed Him the rightful Head of the New Kingdom of God.

Ecce Homo, 44 ff.

The night which followed this busy and eventful Sabbath brought no repose to His body or mind. The excitement around agitated and disturbed Him. It was His first triumphant success, for, in the south, He had met with little sympathy, though He had attracted crowds. But curiosity was not progress, and excitement was not conversion. Lowliness and concealment, not noisy throngs, were the true conditions of His work, and of its firmest establishment, and lasting glory. Mere popularity was, moreover, a renewed temptation, for, as a man, He was susceptible of the same seductions as His brethren. He might be drawn aside to think of Himself, and to His holy soul the faintest approach to this was a surrender to evil. Rising from His couch, therefore, while the deep darkness which precedes the dawn still rested on hill and valley, He left the house so quietly that no one heard Him, and went, once more, to the solitudes of the hills behind the town. Passing through groves of palms, and orchards of fig and olive trees, intermixed with vineyards and grassy meadows, with their

tinkling brooks, so delightful in the East, and their unseen glory of lilies and varied flowers, He soon reached the heights, amongst which, at no great distance from the town, were lonely ravines where He could enjoy perfect seclusion. In the stillness of nature He was alone with His Father, and far from the temptations which troubled the pure simplicity of His soul, and His lowly meekness before God and man. We, now, see the glory of the path He chose, but while He lived, even His disciples would have planned a very different course. Why not take advantage of the excitement of the people to rouse the whole nation, as John had done? Was not His miraculous power a means of endless benefit to men, and should it not, therefore, be made the great feature of His work? Vanity would have suggested plausible grounds for His using His gifts in a way, that, in reality, was not in harmony with the great end of His mission. But His soul remained unsullied, like the stainless light. He came to do the will of His Father, and nothing could make Him for a moment think of Himself. In lonely communion with His own soul, and earnest prayer, the rising breath of temptation passed once more away.[f]

Peter and Andrew, finding Him gone when they awoke, were at a loss what to think. More sick persons were gathering, and the crowds of yesterday promised to be larger to-day. Hasting to the hills, to which they rightly supposed He had retired, and having found Him at last, they fancied He would at once return with them, on hearing that the whole people were seeking Him. But He had a wider sphere than Capernaum, and higher duties than mere bodily healing. "I have not come to heal the sick," said He, "but to announce and spread the kingdom of God. All I do is subordinate to this. Let us, therefore, go to the neighbouring towns, for I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities, as well as to Capernaum."[g] Nor would He be persuaded to return for a time, though some of the people had already found out His retreat, and joined with the disciples in begging Him to do so.

The circuit now begun was the first of a series, in which

CHAP. XXXIII

[14] Matt. 4. 23. Mark 1. 39.

Jesus visited every part of Galilee,[14] preaching and teaching in the synagogue of each town that had one, and often, doubtless, in the open air. It was the bright and sunny time of the year, when the harvest was quickly ripening.[h] The heat was already oppressive at noon, but the mornings and evenings permitted more easy travelling. It was a time of intense labour for the Saviour, of which the day's work in Capernaum was only a sample. The bounds of Galilee embraced the many villages and towns of the Plain of Esdraelon, and the whole of the hilly country north of it, almost to Lebanon. Day by day brought its march from one village or town to others, over the thirsty limestone uplands, where the wanderer thankfully received the cup of cold water, as a gift to be recompensed in the kingdom of God, or through glowing vineyards, or among the corn-fields whitening to the harvest, or falling under the sickle of the reaper. "Every day," said Jesus to His disciples, "has its own troubles;" for weariness; possibly, at times, hunger; the dependence on hospitality for shelter; the pressure of crowds; the stolid indifference of too many; the idle curiosity of more; the ever-present misery of disease in all its forms; and, it may be, even thus early, the opposition of some, must have borne heavily on a nature like His. The news of His miracles had spread like running fire through the whole country, and attracted crowds from all parts. Beyond Palestine, on the north, they had become the common talk of Syria; on the east, they had stirred the population of the wide district of the ten cities,[15] and of Perea, and, on the south, His name was on all lips in Jerusalem and Judea. Erelong, it seemed as if the scenes of John's preaching were returning, for numbers gathered to Him from all these parts, and followed Him, day by day, in His movements through the land. His progress was, indeed, worthy of such an attendance, for no king ever celebrated such a triumph. Conquerors returning from victory over kingdoms and empires had led trains of trembling captives in their train. But, at every resting-place, a sad crowd of sufferers from all diseases and painful affections, and of demoniacs, lunatics, and paralytics, was

[15] The Decapolis.

gathered in the path of Jesus, and He healed them by a word or a touch. Escorted into each town by those whom He had thus restored—the lately sick and dying whom He had instantaneously cured,—it is no wonder that the whole land rang with the story. The enemies over whom He triumphed were pain, and sickness, and death, and the rejoicings that greeted Him were shouts of gratitude and blessing as the Prince of Life.

Only one incident of this wondrous journey is recorded at any length.[16] In one of the cities He visited, He was suddenly met by a man "full of leprosy," a disease at all times terrible, but aggravated, in the opinion of that day, by the belief that it was a direct "stroke of God," as a punishment for special sins.[17] It began with little specks on the eyelids, and on the palms of the hand, and gradually spread over different parts of the body, bleaching the hair white wherever it showed itself, crusting the affected parts with shining scales, and causing swellings and sores. From the skin it slowly ate its way through the tissues, to the bones and joints and even to the marrow,[18] rotting the whole body piecemeal. The lungs, the organs of speech and hearing, and the eyes were attacked in turn, till, at last, consumption or dropsy brought welcome death. The dread of infection kept men aloof from the sufferer, and the Law proscribed him, as, above all men, unclean. The disease was hereditary to the fourth generation. No one thus afflicted could remain in a walled town, though he might live in a village.[19] There were different varieties of leprosy, but all were dreaded as the saddest calamity of life. The leper was required to rend his outer garment, to go bareheaded, and to cover his mouth so as to hide his beard, as was done in lamentation for the dead. He had, further, to warn passers by away from him by the cry of "Unclean, unclean;"[20] not without the thought that the sound would call forth a prayer for the sufferer, and less from the fear of infection, than to prevent contact with one thus visited by God, and unclean.[i] He could not speak to any one, or receive or return a salutation. In the lapse of ages, however, these rules had been in some degree relaxed. A leper might live

16 Matt. 8. 2–4. Mark 1. 40–45. Luke 5. 12–16

17 Ewald's Alt. 210.

18 Winer. Art. "Aussatz."

19 Durch Krankheit zur Genesung.

20 Lev. 13. 45.

in an open village, with any one willing to receive him and to become unclean for his sake, and he might even enter the synagogue, if he had a part specially partitioned off for himself,[21] and was the first to enter the building, and the last to leave. He even at times ventured to enter a town, though forbidden under the penalty of forty stripes. But it was a living death, in the slow advance of which a man became daily more loathsome to himself, and even to his dearest friends. "These four are counted as dead," says the Talmud, "the blind, the leper, the poor, and the childless."[22]

21 A Mechiza.

22 Lightfoot, 518.

The news of the wondrous cures wrought on so many had reached the unfortunate man, who now dared the Law, to make his way to the Healer. Falling at His feet in humble reverence, he delighted the spirit of Jesus by, perhaps, the first open confession of a simple and lowly faith—"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." His kneeling before Him, and addressing Him by such a title, was, indeed, only what he would have done to any one greatly above him,[k] but his frank belief in His power, and his implicit submission to His will, touched a heart so tender. Moved with compassion for the unfortunate, there was no delay—a touch of the hand, and the words, "I will: be thou clean," and he rose, a leper no longer. To have touched him, was, in the eyes of a Jew, to have made Himself unclean, but He had come to break through the deadly externalism that had taken the place of true religion, and could have shown no more strikingly how He looked on mere Rabbinical precepts than by making a touch which, till then, had entailed the worst uncleanness, the means of cleansing. Slight though it seemed, the touch of the leper was the proclamation that Judaism was abrogated henceforth.

The popular excitement had already extended widely, and a cure like this was certain to raise it still higher. With the Baptist in prison on a pretended political charge, and the people full of political dreams in connection with the expected Messiah, all that might fan the flame was to be dreaded. Excitement, moreover, was unfavourable to the great work of Jesus. He needed a thoughtful calm in the

mind, for lasting effects. The kingdom of God which He proclaimed was no mere appeal to the feelings, but sought the understanding and heart. Turning to the newly cured, therefore, He spoke earnestly to him, not to tell any one what had happened, threatening him with His anger, if he should disobey.[23] "Go to Jerusalem," said He, "and show yourself to the priest, and make the offerings for your cleansing, required by the Law, as a proof to your neighbours, to the priests, the scribes, and the people at large, that you are really clean."

[23] ἐμβριμῆσάμενος.

A certificate of the recovery of a leper could only be given at Jerusalem, by a priest, after a lengthened examination, and tedious rites, and, no doubt, these were duly undergone and performed. It will illustrate the "bondage" of the ceremonial law, as then in force, to describe them. With his heart full of the first joy of a cure so amazing, for no one had ever before heard of the recovery of a man "full of leprosy," he set off to the Temple for the requisite papers to authorize his return, once more, to the roll of Israel. A tent had to be pitched outside the city, and in this the priest examined the leper, cutting off all his hair with the utmost care, for if only two hairs were left, the ceremony was invalid. Two sparrows had to be brought at this first stage of the cleansing; the one, to be killed over a small earthen pan of water, into which its blood must drop: the other, after being sprinkled with the blood of its mate,—a cedar twig, to which scarlet wool and a piece of hyssop were bound, being used to do so,—was let free in such a direction that it should fly to the open country. After the scrutiny by the priest, the leper put on clean clothes, and carried away those he had worn to a running stream, to wash them thoroughly, and to cleanse himself by a bath. He could now enter the city, but for seven days more could not enter his own house. On the eighth day after, he once more submitted to the scissors of the priest, who cut off whatever hair might have grown in the interval. Then followed a second bath, and now he had only carefully to avoid any defilement, so as to be fit to attend in the Temple next morning, and complete his

CHAP. XXXIII. cleansing. The first step in this final purification was to offer three lambs, two males and a female, none of which must be under a year old. Standing at the outer edge of the court of the men, which he was not yet worthy to enter, the leper waited the longed-for rites. These began by the priest taking one of the male lambs destined to be slain as an atonement for the leper, and leading it to each point of the compass in turn, and by his swinging a vessel of oil on all sides, in the same way, as if to present both to the universally present God. He then led the lamb to the leper, who laid his hands on its head, and gave it over as a sacrifice for his guilt, which he now confessed. It was forthwith killed at the north side of the altar, two priests catching its blood, the one in a vessel, the other in his hand. The first now sprinkled the altar with the blood, while the other went to the leper and anointed his ears, his right thumb, and his right toe with it. The one priest then poured some oil of the leper's offering into the left hand of the other, who, in his turn, dipped his finger seven times into the oil thus held, and sprinkled it as often towards the Holy of Holies. Each part of the leper which before had been touched with the blood, was then further anointed with the oil, what remained being stroked on his head.

The leper could now enter the men's court, and did so, passing through it to that of the priests. The female lamb was next killed, as a sin-offering, after he had put his hands on its head, part of its blood being smeared on the horns of the altar, while the rest was poured out at the altar base. The other male lamb was then slain for a burnt sacrifice; the leper once more laying his hands on its head, and the priest sprinkling its blood on the altar. The fat, and all that was fit for an offering, was now laid on the altar, and burned as a "sweet-smelling savour" to God. A meat-offering of fine wheat meal and oil ended the whole; a portion being laid on the altar, while the rest, with the two lambs, of which only a small part had been burned, formed the dues of the priest.[24] It was not till all this had been done that the full ceremony of cleansing, or showing himself to the priest, had been carried out,[1] and that the cheering words, "Thou art

[24] Durch Krankheit, &c., *passim*.

pure," restored the sufferer once more to the rights of citizenship and of intercourse with men. No wonder that even a man like St. Peter, so tenderly minded to his ancestral religion, should speak of its requirements as a yoke which "neither our fathers nor we are able to bear."[25]

[25] Acts 15. 10.

Of the after-history of the leper thus cleansed we are not informed. It appears, however, that his joy at being healed was too great to be repressed even by Christ's grave imposition of silence. The multitudes around Jesus would soon, of themselves, spread news of the miracle, but the healed man widened and heightened the excitement by telling everywhere on his road to Jerusalem what had befallen him. The result was that Jesus could no longer enter a town or city, so great was the commotion His presence excited. Nor was it of any avail that He retired to the open country, for even when He betook Himself to the upland solitudes, great multitudes continually sought Him out,[m] either to hear His words, or to be healed of their various diseases.

In such busy and exhausting scenes the days of early autumn passed. But, whatever the returning toils of each morning, the Saviour still craved and secured hours of lonely calm, for we read in St. Luke that, during all these weeks, He was wont to withdraw, doubtless by night, into lonely places to pray.[26]

[26] ἦν ὑποχωρῶν. Imperfect of custom. Winer, 252

# CHAPTER XXXIV.

## LIGHT AND DARKNESS.



THE cure of the leper seems to have resulted in Jesus returning, for a moment, to Capernaum. He had acted with the greatest caution during His mission, to avoid giving offence, and thus raising opposition, which would be fatal at the very opening of His ministry. From many a hill-top on His journeyings, He and His disciples had, doubtless, often looked to the mountains in the south-east, amidst which John lay, a helpless prisoner; and they must have felt that the prince who had thus cut short the work of the great Reformer, might be readily moved to the same violence towards themselves. Jesus had, therefore, shunned notoriety; and though He never hesitated to accept homage, where it was sincere and spontaneous, He had never demanded it, and had kept even His miraculous powers in strict subordination to the great work of proclaiming the advent of the kingdom of God. The appeals of pain and misery had, indeed, constrained Him to relieve them, but He had accompanied His miracles by a strict prohibition of their being made publicly known, further than was inevitable.

In spite of every precaution, however, the report of His wonderful doings spread far and wide, and drew ever increasing attention. Political circles, as yet, did not condescend to notice Him, but the sleepless eyes of the ecclesiastical authorities were already watching Him. It was enough that He acted independently of them. Not to be with them was, in their eyes, to be against them, for they claimed, as the spiritual leaders of the nation, the sole direction of its religious teaching. The more wonderful His works, the

greater their excitement, and the keener their jealousy. In any case, therefore, the words which accompanied such extraordinary manifestations, would have been watched with the closest scrutiny, for any chance of vindicating their care of the religious interests entrusted to them. In an age of such rigid literalism and unchanging conservatism, no teacher with the least individuality of thought or expression could hope to escape, where the determination to condemn was already fixed. Far less was it possible for One like Jesus—so sincere amidst general insincerity; so intense and real amidst what was hollow and outward; so pure and elevated amidst what was gross and worldly; so tenderly human, amidst what was harsh and exclusive—to avoid giving pretext for censure. The priests and Rabbis, through the whole land, felt instinctively that their influence was imperilled by His lightest word. They, already, were coldly suspicious. The next step would be to blame, and they would seek, before long, to destroy Him, for it has, in all ages, been the sad characteristic of the leaders of dominant religious parties, to confound the gratification of the worst passions with loyalty to their office.

Perhaps Jesus had hoped that in Capernaum, at least, He would find an interval of repose, for His absence might have been expected to have allayed the excitement. No spot in Palestine seemed less likely to be disturbed by the hostility of the schools. In Jerusalem, men looked back to a past dating from Melchisedek, and were its slaves, but Capernaum was so new that its name does not occur at all in the Old Testament. But He soon found that the dark and hateful genius of Rabbinism, with its puerile customs and formulas, and its fierce bigotry, was abroad through the whole land.

It was vain to expect that a "city set on a hill" could be hidden. He had scarcely re-entered the town, before it ran from mouth to mouth that He had returned, and was at home.[1] Crowds presently gathered, and filled not only the house, but the space before it. There was to be no rest for the Son of Man till He found it in the garden grave of Joseph of Arimathea. The applause, the gaping wonder,

[1] Matt. 9. 2—9. Mark 2. 1—14 Luke 5. 17—28

the huge concourse of people, were only a grief to Him. He had broken away from them before, and sought refuge from the temptations they tended to excite, in lonely prayer by night, on the neighbouring hills, under the pure and silent stars. They had followed Him on His journey from town to town, and, now, on His return to Capernaum, the clamour of voices, and the pressure of throngs, beset Him more than ever. Had anxiety to hear the truths of the new spiritual kingdom caused this excitement, it would have been healthy, but it had been already shown only too clearly that, while men believed in His power to heal, they cared little for His higher claims. Regret for bodily illness, or ready sympathy with the sufferers, simply as under physical trouble, was evidently the only thought, to the exclusion of any sense of graver spiritual disease in all alike. The very maladies often revealed moral impurity as their cause; and the selfish struggle for His favour, and the too frequent ingratitude of the cured, saddened His soul. Of the multitudes whom He had healed, most had disappeared, without any signs of having heeded His appeals and warnings. Even the leper, who had at least promised silence, was hardly out of His presence before he forgot his pledge.[2] He was already the Man of Sorrows, but divine compassion still urged Him to heal.

To make the trial greater, it was evident that mischief was brewing. The Rabbis were astir. They had heard of the multitudes attracted from the other side of the Jordan on the east; from as far as Jerusalem,[3] and even Idumea, on the south, and from Phenicia on the north;[4] and had followed the crowds, and gathered in Capernaum from every town of Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem itself, to hear and see the new wonder. Sensitive in their own interest, they came with no friendly motive, but cold and hostile; to criticize, and, if possible, to condemn.

Even in Galilee the influence of the order was great. It had done immense service to the nation in earlier days in kindling an intense feeling of nationality, and an enthusiasm, at first healthy and beneficial, though now perverted, for their faith.[5] The Rabbis were the heads of the nation

[2] Schenkel, Charakterbild, 76.

[3] Matt. 4. 22, 23.

[4] Mark 3. 8.

[5] Pressel, in Herzog, xii. 472.

in the widest sense, for the religion of the people was also their politics. They were the theologians, the jurists, the legislators, the politicians, and, indeed, the soul of Israel.[6] The priests had sunk to a subordinate place in the public regard. The veneration which the people felt for their Law was willingly extended to its teachers. They were greeted reverently in the street and in the market-place, men rising up before them as they passed; the title of Rabbi was universally accorded them; the front seats of the synagogues were set apart for them; and they took the place of honour at all family rejoicings, that they might discourse, incidentally, to the company, on the Law. Wise in their generation, they fostered this homage by external aids. Their long robes, their broad phylacteries, or prayer fillets, on their forehead and arm, their conspicuous Tephillin, with the sacred tassels dangling from each corner, were part of themselves, without which they were never seen. The people gloried in them as the crown of Israel, and its distinguishing honour above all other nations.[a] "Learn where is wisdom," says Baruch, "where is strength, where is understanding. It has not been heard of in Canaan, nor seen in Teman. The Hagarenes seek wisdom, and the traders of Meran and Teman, and the poets and philosophers, but they have not found out the way of wisdom, or discovered her path. God has found out the whole way of wisdom, and hath given it to His servant Jacob, and to Israel, His beloved."[7] Jerusalem was, naturally, while the Temple-worship continued, the head-quarters of the wisdom of the Rabbis, but they were found in all the synagogue towns both of Judea and Galilee. They formed the members of the local, ecclesiastical, and criminal courts over the country, and at Jerusalem, virtually controlled the authorities, and thus framed the religious and general law for the nation at large, so far as allowed by the Romans. Their activity never rested. Whether as guests from the Holy City, or as residents, they pervaded the land, visiting every school and synagogue, to extend their influence by teaching and exhortations. A Rabbi, indeed, could move from place to place with little trouble, for, in most cases, he lived by trade

[6] Schriftgelehrte, Herzog, xiii. 737.

[7] Baruch 3. 14, 22 ff.

CHAP. XXXIV.

or handicraft, and could thus unite business and religion in his missionary journeys. Their ceaseless circuits are painted in the Targum on Deborah's song. It makes the prophetess say—"I am sent to praise the Scribes of Israel, who ceased not, in the evil times, to expound the Law. It was beautiful to see how they sat in the synagogues, and taught the people the words of the Law; how they uttered the blessings, and confessed the truth before God. They neglected their own affairs, and rode on asses round the whole land, and sat for judgment." The paraphrase is an anachronism when applied to the age of the Judges, but it vividly illustrates Rabbinical zeal in the days of Christ.[8]

Soon after His return to Capernaum, an incident occurred which led to the first open difference between Jesus and this all-powerful order. The crowds had gathered in such numbers at Peter's house, that not only the house itself, but the space before it, was once more full. Among the audience were Scribes from all parts, to see if they should unite with the new movement, and turn it to their own purposes, or take measures against it. If we may judge from the ruins on the site of the town, the house was only a single very low story high, with a flat roof, reached by a stairway from the yard or court,[9] and Jesus may have stood near the door, in such a position as to be able to address the crowd outside, as well as those in the chamber.[b] Possibly, however, there were two stories in this particular house, as there must have been in some in the town, and in that case the upper one would likely be a large room—the "upper" and best chamber—such as was often used elsewhere by Rabbis, for reading and expounding the Law to their disciples,[10] and Jesus may have stood near the open window, so as to be heard both outside and within.[11]

From some favourable spot He was addressing the thickly crowded audience about the kingdom of God, so long prophesied, and now, at last, in their midst, when four men approached bearing a sick person, on a hammock slung between them. It proved to be a man entirely paralyzed. Unable to make their way through the throng, the bearers went round the house to see what should be done. They

[8] Hausrath, i. 79, 80.

[9] Matt. 24. 17. Land and Book, 358.

[10] Lightfoot, Mark, ii. 400. Delitzsch, Ein Tag in Capernaum, 36.

[11] Ewald, Geschichte, v. 375.

had likely come from a distance, and thus were too late to get at once near the great Healer. The outside stairs to the roof, however, offered them a solution of their difficulty. The sick man was bent on getting to the feet of Jesus, and willingly let them raise him, which they were able to do by fastening cords to the hammock, and pulling it up, after they themselves had got to the top by the narrow and ladder-like steps.

Their trembling burden once safely on the roof, the rest was easy. Eastern houses are, in many ways, very different from ours, but in none more strikingly than in the lightness of the roof. Rafters are laid on the top of the side walls, about three feet apart, and on these short sticks are put, till the whole space is covered. Over these, again, a thick coating of brushwood, or of some common bush, is spread. A coat of mortar comes next, burying and levelling all beneath it, and on this again is spread marl or earth, which is rolled flat and hard.[12] Many roofs, indeed, are much slighter—earth closely rolled or beaten down, perhaps mixed with ashes, lime, and chopped straw,—being all the owners can afford, and thus, even at this day, it is common to see grass growing on the house-top after the rains, and repairs of cracks made by the sun's rays are often needed in the hot season, to prevent heavy leakage.[13] It is thus easy to break up a roof when necessary, and it is often done. The earth is merely scraped back from a part, and the thorns and short sticks removed, till an opening of the required size is made.[14]

[12] Land and Book, 359.

[13] *Arts.* "Häuser," and "Dach," in Bibel Lex., by Roskoff and Grundt, *pass.*

[14] Land and Book, 359.

Through some such simple roofing the four bearers now opened a space large enough to let down the sick man into the chamber where Jesus stood.[c] Cords tied to the couch made the rest easy, and the paralytic was presently at the feet of Jesus. He lay there, the living dead, but his outward troubles were not his greatest. Looking on his calamity as a punishment from God for past sins,—perhaps feeling that it had been brought upon him by a vicious life,—he was even more sorely stricken in spirit than in body. No one, he felt, could help him but He to reach whom had been his deepest wish. To be healed within, was even more with him than to be restored to outward health. He had nothing

CHAP. XXXIV. to say; perhaps he could not speak, for palsy often hinders articulation. But his eyes told his whole story, and He before whom he had thus strangely come read it at a glance. He was still a young man, which in itself awakened sympathy, but he had, besides, in his anxiety to get near, by whatever means, and the humility which sought cleansing from guilt more than restoration to health, shown a recognition of Christ's higher dignity as the dispenser of spiritual blessings. With an endearing word used by teachers to disciples, or by superiors in age or rank, Jesus flashed the light of hope on his troubled spirit. "My child," said He, "thy sins are forgiven thee."

It was a wondrous utterance, and must have sounded still more strangely, when thus first heard, than to us, who have been familiar with it from childhood. No one had ever heard Him admit, even by a passing word, His own sinfulness; He showed no humility before God as a sinner; never sought pardon at His hands. Yet no Rabbi approached Him in opposition to all that was wrong, for He went even beyond the act to the sinful desire. The standard He demanded was no less than the awful perfection of God. But those round Him heard Him now rise above any mere tacit assumption of this sinless purity by His setting Himself in open contrast to sinners, in His claim not only to announce the forgiveness of sins by God, but, Himself, to dispense it. He pardons the sins of the repentant creature before Him on His own authority, as a King, which it would be contradictory to have done had He Himself been conscious of having sin and guilt of His own. It was clear that He could have ventured on no such assumption of the prerogative of God, had He not felt in Himself an absolute harmony of spiritual nature with Him, so that He uttered only what He knew was the divine will.[15] It was at once a proclamation of His own sinlessness, and of His kingly dignity as the Messiah, in whose hands had been placed the rule over the new theocracy.

[15] Ullmann, Sündlosigkeit, 65, 66.

The Rabbis felt, in a moment, all that such words implied. Their only idea of a religious teacher was that he should never venture a word on his own authority, but slavishly

follow other earlier Rabbis. They had all the conservatism of lawyers. One Beth-din could not put aside the decision of another, unless it was superior in wisdom and numbers,[16] and how little likely it was that, even in such a case, any decision should be superseded, may be judged from the fact that for any one to dispute with a Rabbi or murmur against him, or to hesitate in accepting and obeying his every word, was no less a crime than to do the same towards God Himself.[17] Even the people had caught the spirit of changeless conservatism from their teachers, for, when John Hyrcanus, with a kindly view to relieve them from an almost intolerable burden, ventured to prohibit some trifling Rabbinical rules of the Pharisees, his well-meant liberality, instead of gaining him favour, excited hatred against him as an intruder and innovator.[18] The type of a strict Rabbi found its ideal in Schammäi, the rival of Hillel, and founder of the school which was most bitter against Jesus. It was not enough that he sought to make even young children fast through the whole day of Pardon: during the Feast of Tabernacles he had the roof taken from the room in which lay his daughter-in-law and her new-born son, to have a tent raised over them, that the baby might be able to keep the feast.[19]

The lofty words of Jesus at once caught the ears of the lawyers on the watch. They sounded new, and to be new was to be dangerous. Nothing in Judaism had been left unfixed; every religious act, and indeed, every act whatever, must follow minutely prescribed rules. The Law knew no such form as an official forgiving of sins, or absolution. The leper might be pronounced clean by the priest, and a transgressor might present a sin-offering at the Temple, and transfer his guilt to it, by laying his hands on its head and owning his fault before God, and the blood sprinkled by the priest on the horns of the altar, and towards the Holy of Holies, was an atonement that "covered" his sins from the eyes of Jehovah, and pledged his forgiveness. But that forgiveness was the direct act of God; no human lips dared pronounce it. It was a special prerogative of the Almighty,[20] and even should mortal man venture to declare it, he could only do so in the name of Jehovah, and by His immediate

16 Derenbourg, 124.

17 Eisenmenger, i. 331, 332.

18 Derenbourg, 121.

19 Derenbourg, 190.

20 Exod. 34. 7. Ps. 32. 2, 5. Jer. 31. 34; 33. 8.

authorization. But Jesus had spoken in His own name. He had not hinted at being empowered by God to act for Him. The Scribes were greatly excited; whispers, ominous head-shakings, dark looks, and pious gesticulations of alarm, showed that they were ill at ease. "He should have sent him to the priest to present his sin-offering, and have it accepted: it is blasphemy to speak of forgiving sins; He is intruding on the divine rights." The blasphemer was to be put to death by stoning, his body hung on a tree, and then buried with shame.[21] "Who can forgive sins but One, God?"

[21] Lev. 24. 16. Ant. iv. 8. 6.

It was the turning point in the life of Jesus, for the accusation of blasphemy, now muttered in the hearts of the Rabbis present, was the beginning of the process which ended, after a time, on Calvary; and He knew it. The genius of Rabbinism was in direct antagonism to that of His "new teaching." Christ required a change of heart; the Rabbis, instruction; He looked at the motive of an act; they, at its strict accordance to legal forms; He contented Himself with implanting a principle of pure and loving obedience in the breast, which should make men a law to themselves: they taught that every detail of religious observance, from the cradle to the grave,—to the very smallest,—should be prescribed, and rigidly followed in every formal particular. He promised the Divine Spirit to aid His followers to a perfect obedience; the Rabbis enforced obedience by the terrors of the Church courts, which they controlled.[22] Resting thus on wholly different conceptions; the Rabbi, self-satisfied in the observance of external rites and requirements; Jesus repudiating merit, and basing His kingdom on the willing service of humble and grateful love, the only question was how long, in an intolerant theocracy, active hostility might be averted. The lowly, wandering, Galilæan teacher, who despised long robes and phylacteries, and associated with the rude and ignorant, from whom the Rabbis shrank as accursed for not knowing the Rabbinical law; who had no license as teacher from any Beth-din; who had attended no Beth-ha-Midrasch, or Rabbis' School of the Law, and was thus a mere untrained layman, usurping clerical functions, was

[22] Pressel, Rabbinismus. Herzog, xii. 473.

instinctively suspected and hated, though they could not affect to despise Him. The kingdom of God which He preached was, moreover, something new and irregular. In the words of Baruch,[23] they expected that all who kept the Law in their sense, would, in return, have eternal life as a right, as indeed, one of their proverbs plainly put it,—"He who buys the words of the Law, buys everlasting life."[24] Esteeming themselves blamelessly righteous,[25] they not only despised others, but claimed Heaven, as the special favourites of God. It must, therefore, have been galling in the extreme, to hear Jesus demand humility and repentance, and faith in Himself, as the universal conditions of entrance into the new kingdom of God; to be confounded with the crowd on whom they looked as Brahmins on Sudras; and to be stripped of their boasting, and even of their hopes of future political glory, by the proclamation of a new and purely spiritual theocracy, in the place of the national restoration of which they dreamed, with themselves at its head.[26] Only a spark was wanting to set their hostility ablaze, and this had now been supplied.

For the time they were helpless, in the presence of so much enthusiasm for Jesus, but this only increased their bitterness, on their finding that He had kept His eyes on them, and knew their thoughts. They were now still more confused by His openly asking them, "Why they were thinking evil in their hearts?" He had long felt that He could not hope to make any healthy impression on a class who affected to regard Him as half beside Himself on religious matters,[27] and as one who had set Himself up as a Rabbi, and excited the people against their teachers. He knew that they put the worst construction on all He said, and were laying up matter for future open attack. But no passing thought of fear disturbed Him. He had come to witness to the truth, and at once accepted the challenge which their hostile looks and bearings implied. Without waiting to be assailed, He suddenly asked them, "Which is easier? To say to this paralytic, Thy sins are forgiven, or to say, Rise, and take up thy bed and go?" There might be deception about the forgiveness, for no one could tell if the

[23] Baruch 4. 2.
[24] P. Aboth.
[25] Phil. 3. 6. Luke 18. 9. Matt. 23. 28.
[26] Schriftgelehrte. Herzog, xiii. 740.
[27] Mark 3. 21. Acts 26. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 13.

CHAP. XXXIV absolution were of any avail, but there could be none respecting the cure of a helpless living corpse. Turning to the bed without waiting an answer, He continued—in irresistible self-vindication—"That ye may know that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins,—Rise, poor man, take up the mat on which you have been lying, and go home." It was enough; sensibility and power of motion returned to the helpless limbs; muscles and nerves lost their torpor; strength poured once more through the veins. Slowly, scarce realizing what it meant, he rose, little by little, his eyes fixed on his deliverer, till, at last, he stood erect before Him, to sink at His knees again in grateful adoration. But he could not be allowed to stay. Stepping back, without saying a word, Jesus, by a look, motioned him to retire, and lifting the mat,[d] he did so, his eyes still fixed on his helper, as he made his way backward through the awe-stricken crowd.

The effect was electric. The Scribes were, for the time, discomfited. Amazement and fear mingled with religious awe. "We never saw it thus," cried some, while others, with true Eastern demonstrativeness, broke out into praise of God who had given such power to men. Meanwhile, Jesus glided out of the apartment, sad at heart, for the shadow of the cross had fallen on His soul.

A number of disciples must, by this time, have been gained in different parts, but the inner circle gathered by Jesus, as His personal followers, was as yet limited to the few whom He had first "called." Another was, now, however, to be added to their number. Capernaum, as a busy trading town, on the marches between the dominions of Philip and those of Antipas, and, from its being on the high road between Damascus and Ptolemais,[28] had a strong staff of custom-house officers, or publicans,[e] to use the common name. The traffic landed at Capernaum from across the Lake, or shipped from it, had to pay dues, and so had all that entered or left the town in other directions. There were tolls on the highways, and on the bridges, and at each place the humbler grades of publicans were required, while a few of a higher rank had charge of the aggregate receipts

[28] Acre.

of the minor offices of the district. These officials were often freemen, or even slaves of the larger farmers of the local imposts; sometimes natives of the part, and even poor Roman citizens. The whole class, however, had a bad name for greed and exaction.[29] So loud, indeed, and serious, did the remonstrances of the whole Roman world become at the tyranny and plunderings thus suffered, that, a generation later, Nero proposed to the Senate to do away with taxes altogether, though the idea resulted only in an official admission that the "greed of the publicans must be repressed, lest they should at last, by new vexations, render the public burdens intolerable."[30] The underlings, especially, sought to enrich themselves by grinding the people: and the checks they caused to commerce, the trouble they gave by reckless examination of goods, and by tedious delays; by false entries, and illegal duties; made them intensely hated. "Bears and lions," said a proverb, "might be the fiercest wild beasts in the forests, but publicans and informers were the worst in the cities."[31] The Jews, who bore the Roman yoke with more impatience than any other nation, and shunned all contact with foreigners, excommunicated every Israelite who became a publican, and declared him incompetent to bear witness in their courts, and the disgrace extended to his whole family. Nobody was allowed to take alms from one, or to ask him to change money for them. They were even classed with highway robbers and murderers,[32] or with harlots, heathen, and sinners. No strict Jew would eat, or even hold intercourse, with them.[33]

With a supreme indifference to the prejudices of the day, Jesus resolved to receive one of this proscribed order into the inner group of His followers. With a wide and generous charity He refused to condemn a whole class. That they were outcasts from society was a special reason why He, the Son of Man, should seek to win them to a better life. He refused to admit anything wrong in paying tribute to Cæsar,[34] and hence saw no sin in its collection. There was no necessity for a publican not being just and faithful, alike to the people and to the State, and He had seen for Himself that

[29] Liv. xxv. 3; xlv. 18. Cic. ad Quint. i. 1, 11. Verr. i. 10; iii. 10.

[30] Tac. Ann. xiii. 50.

[31] Stob. Serm. ii. 34.

[32] M. Nedar, iii. 4.

[33] *Art.* "Zöllner, in Herzog, xviii. 152.

[34] Matt. 22. 21

CHAP. XXXIV

there were some against whom nothing could be justly urged.[f] It was, moreover, a fundamental principle with Him, that the worst of men, if they sincerely repented, and turned to God, should be gladly received, as prodigal sons who sought to regain the favour of their Father in heaven. He had come to seek and to save that which was lost, and He sought to proclaim to mankind that He despaired of none, by recognizing, in the most hopeless, the possibility of good. Looking abroad on the world with a divine love and compassion that knew no distinction of race or calling, He designed to show, at its very birth, that the kingdom He came to establish was open to all humanity, and that the only condition of citizenship was spiritual fitness.

Among the publicans, at one of the posts for collecting duties, at Capernaum, was one whom his name, Levi, marked as belonging to the old priestly tribe, though, perhaps, born in Galilee, and now sunk to so questionable a position. He had another name, Matthew, however, by which he is better known as one of the Apostles, and the author of the first Gospel. His business was to examine the goods passing either way on the great high road between the territories of the two neighbouring tetrarchs, to enter them on the official record, to take the duties and credit them in his books, in order, finally, to pay over the gross proceeds, at given times, to the local tax-farmer. He seems to have been in comfortable circumstances, and it is, perhaps, due to his clerkly habits as a publican, that we owe to him the earliest of the Gospels. He was the son of one Alphēus, the name of the father of James the Less. They may, however, have been different persons, as the name was a very common one;[35] and we know that there were two Judes, two Simons, and two called James, in the narrow circle of Jesus.

[35] Lightfoot, Acts 1. 13.

Doubtless Levi, or Matthew, had shown an interest in the new Teacher, and had been among the crowds that thronged Him. The quick eye of Jesus had read his heart, and seen his sincerity. Though a publican, he was a Jew, and showed repentance and hopeful trust, which made him a true son of Abraham. The booth in which, in Oriental fashion, he sat at his duties, was at the harbour of the town,

on the way to the shore where Jesus was in the habit of addressing the throngs who now always followed Him, and it needed only a look and a word of the Master, to make him throw up his office, and cast in his lot with Him. At the command of Jesus he "left all, rose up, and followed Him;" not, of course, on the moment, for he would have to take formal steps to release himself, and would require to settle his accounts with his superior, before he was free. Henceforth, however, he attended Him who soon had not where to lay His head. It was a critical time for Jesus, and His admission of a publican as a disciple could not fail to irritate His enemies still more. But He had no hesitation in His course. Sent to the lost, He gladly welcomed, to His inmost circle, one of their number in whom He saw the germs of true spiritual life, in calm disregard of all the prejudices of the time, and all the false religious narrowness of His fellow countrymen, and their ecclesiastical leaders. He desired, in the choice of a publican as apostle, to embody visibly His love for sinners, and show the quickening virtue of the kingdom of God, even in the most unlikely.

An act so entirely new and revolutionary, in the best sense, was too momentous in the eyes of Matthew to pass unnoticed. It was the opening of a new day for the multitudes whom the narrow self-righteousness of the Rabbis had branded as under the curse of God, and had condemned as hopeless before Him. The new "call" of Jesus was in vivid contrast to that of Abraham and Moses, for Abraham had been separated even from his tribe, and Moses summoned only the Jews to found the theocracy he proposed to establish. The "call" which Matthew had obeyed was as infinitely comprehensive as the earlier ones had been rigidly exclusive. It showed that all would be admitted to the society Jesus was setting up, whatever their social position, if they had spiritual fitness for membership. Caste was utterly disallowed: before the great Teacher, all men, as such, were recognized as equally sons of the Heavenly Father. Accustomed from infancy to take this for granted, we cannot realize the magnitude of the gift this new principle inaugurated, or its astounding novelty. A Brahmin, who should

CHAP. XXXIV. proclaim it in India, and illustrate the social enfranchisement he taught, by raising a despised Pariah to his intimate intercourse and friendship, would be the only counterpart we can imagine at this day.

It was natural, therefore, that Matthew should celebrate an event so unique as his call, by a "great feast[36] in his house," in honour of Jesus; and no less so that he should invite a large number of his class, to rejoice with him at the new era opened to them, or that he should extend the invitation to his friends of the proscribed classes generally. A number of persons in bad odour with their more correct fellow-citizens were thus brought together by him, along with the publicans of the locality, to do Jesus honour: persons branded by public opinion as "sinners," a name given indiscriminately to usurers, gamblers, thieves, publicans, shepherds, and sellers of fruit grown in the sabbath years.[37] It might have seemed doubtful whether Jesus would sit down with such a company, for, even with us, it would be a bold step for any public teacher to join a gathering of persons in bad repute. The admission of Matthew to the discipleship must have seemed to many a great mistake. Nothing could more certainly damage the prospects of Jesus with the influential classes, or create a wider or deeper prejudice and distrust. But nothing weighed for a moment with Him against truth and right. His soul was filled with a grand enthusiasm for humanity, and no false or narrow exclusiveness of the day could be allowed to stand in its way. He accepted the invitation with the readiest cheerfulness, and spent the evening in the pleasures of friendly social intercourse with the strange assembly.

The Rabbis had hardly as yet made up their minds how to act respecting Him. They had attended John's preaching, though they did not submit to his baptism, which would have been to own his sweeping charges against their order, as a brood of serpents. But Jesus had not as yet attacked them. He would fain have won them, as well as the people, to the kingdom of God. He had preached this kingdom, and the need of righteousness: had honoured Moses and the prophets: had pressed, as His great precepts, the love of

[36] Luke 5. 29—39. Mark 2. 15—22. Matt. 9. 10—17.

[37] Sanh. xxv. 2.

God and our neighbour; and in all these matters the Pharisees could support Him. He had enforced moderation on His disciples, and had sought intercourse with the Rabbis, rather than shunned it. His reply to their earlier opposition was gentle, though unanswerable. No doubt He knew from the first that they would reject His overtures, but it was none the less right to seek to woo them to friendship, that they might enter His kingdom if they would.[38] Had they joined Him, their influence would have aided His work: if they refused, He had done His part. He did, indeed, win some. Here and there a Rabbi humbled himself to follow Him though He did not belong to the schools, and was the deadly opponent of their cherished traditions. Others hesitated, but some even of the leading Pharisees, as at Capernaum, invited Him to their houses and tables, listened to His teaching, reasoned modestly with Him, and treated Him, every way, with respect. He was looked upon by them as a friend of the nation, and the title of Rabbi was willingly given Him.[39]

[38] Matt. 9. 6, 12; 12. 3.

[39] Matt. 8. 19; 17. 10; 19. 16 Mark 12. 28.

But it became clearer, each day, that there could be no alliance between views so opposed as His and theirs. Where action was needed He would not for a moment conceal His difference from them, and Matthew's feast was an occasion on which a great principle demanded decisive expression.

To the Rabbis, and the Pharisees at large, nothing could be more unbecoming and irregular than the presence of Jesus at Matthew's feast. To be Levitically "clean," was the supreme necessity of their religious lives. They regarded themselves as true friends of their race, and they were, in fact, the leaders of the nation. But they looked at men not simply as such, but through the cold superficial medium of an artificial theology, which dried up their sympathy. Their philanthropy was narrowed to the limits of Levitical purity. Publicans and sinners, and the mass of the lower classes, were, to a Pharisee, hopelessly lost, because of their "uncleanness," and he shrank from all contact with them. He might wish to save, but he dared not touch, or come near them, and so left them to their misery and sin. No Pharisee would receive a person as a guest if he

CHAP. XXXIV.

suspected that he was a "sinner."[40] He would not let one of the "Amhaaretz"—the common people—touch him.[41] It was unlawful to come into their company, even with the holy design of inducing them to read the Law,[42] and it was defilement to take food from them, or, indeed, from any stranger, or even to touch a knife belonging to them.[43] The thousands "unclean" from mere ignorance, or from their callings, or from carelessness, were an "abomination," "vermin," "unclean beasts," and "twice accursed."[44] And as to touch the clothes of one of the "common people," defiled every Pharisee alike, the touch of those of a Pharisee of a lower grade of Levitical purity defiled one of a higher. Like the Essenes, one Pharisee avoided the contact of another less strict, and, therefore, of a lower rank of holiness.[45]

It must, therefore, have been as if a Brahmin had outraged every idea of Hindoo religion and morals, by sitting down at a meal with Sudras, when the Rabbis at Capernaum saw and heard of Jesus reclining at table among a promiscuous gathering of publicans and sinners.[46]

They had not yet, however, come to open controversy with Him, and contented themselves with contemptuous taunts about Him to the disciples, who, as Jews, must have at least formerly shared the sovereign contempt felt for such hated social outcasts. Even to hold a religious service with them would have been a breach of the Law, but to join them on a footing of friendly intercourse! "Founder of a new *holy* kingdom of God, and recline at table with publicans and sinners!"[g] How keenly such words must have wounded men like Peter, and the small knot of disciples as yet round Jesus, may be imagined. They had been taught in the school of the Baptist, an earnest Jew, who had enforced ultra-Pharisaic Judaism. The early scruples of Peter survived even to apostolic times.[47] James was a Nazarite, if we can trust tradition, till his death,[h] and even Matthew, the priestly publican, for his name Levi shows him to have been of priestly race, is said to have eaten, through life, only fruit, vegetables, and bread, but no flesh.[48] In their perplexity and distress they appealed to Jesus.

40 Sohar, Gen. f. 50.
41 Schöttgen, 93. 275. Luke 7. 39. Isaiah 65. 5.
42 Mechilta, f. 37. 2.
43 Sepp, ii. 293.
44 Grätz, 76. Jost, i. 205.
45 Jost, i. 205.
46 Keim, ii. 295. Godwyn's Aaron and Moses, 41. Sepp, Leben, &c., ii. 293. Nork, 59, 112. Lightfoot, ii. 401. Buxtorf, 1146.
47 Gal. 2. 14. Acts 10. 9.
48 Clement, Pædag. ii. 1.

It was well they did so, for their distress procured for all ages an answer of divine sweetness and grandeur. "To whom *should* I go but to such as these? The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.[i] Turn to the prophets whom you revere, and think what the words of Hosea mean,[49] 'I desire mercy[k] and not sacrifice,'—acts rather than offerings—practical godliness, not legal forms—divine sympathy with the lost, rather than only the empty show of outward worship—for I have not come to call the righteous, but to call sinners to repentance. I expect nothing from men who think they are righteous and despise others.[50] They feel no need of me. My help is needed for just such 'sinners' as they would have me leave to perish."

[49] Hosea 6. 6. Matt. 9. 11—14. Mark 2. 16—18. Luke 5. 30—33.

[50] Luke 18. 9. For parallels in heathen writers, Sepp ii. 294.

Jesus had not, of course, the bodily sick in His thoughts. He spoke of the mass of the people of the middle and lower ranks, too sadly marked by religious shortcomings and unworthiness. The guests at Matthew's table were, doubtless, more or less open to accusations of covetousness, impurity, indifference to morality and religion, and troublesomeness as citizens. John would have kept himself aloof from them, unless they came as penitents, for baptism. He had lived in wildernesses, apart from men, shrinking from the turmoil of the great world. He had even forbidden lawful enjoyments and pleasures. He had sought to build up the Kingdom of Heaven on the lonely banks of the Jordan, far from men, by sternly commanding the broken hearts that sought peace and consolation from him, to live lives of Jewish austerity and repentance. Jesus required a change of heart no less than he, but He did not lead men out of the world to secure it, or burden life with the anxiety and disquiet of an outward purity.

He came trustfully to them into their little world, bringing with Him a heart full of divine benevolence and tender gentleness. In His eyes they were "sick," and He treated them like a true physician, entering into all their interests, sympathizing with their cares and sorrows, realizing their special wants, and bearing Himself as a friend among friends. They were men, and, as such, capable of sorrow for sin, and efforts

CHAP. XXXIV.

towards a nobler life. They had hearts to recognize goodness, and might thus be won to faith in Himself, as the ideal of the highest spiritual life. Nothing can mark the grandeur of His enthusiasm for humanity, more than that He thus proposed to lay the foundation of His kingdom in a class on which the priests and theologians, and the higher ranks of the day, looked down with haughty contempt and moral aversion. It shows how deeply He looked into things, that He recognized the greater openness for the Truth, of castes thus discredited; their franker and more decisive bearing towards the startling innovations of His teaching; their deeper longing for peace of conscience and reconciliation to God. It was the sense of this that had led to the choice of His first disciples from the ranks of the people; and it was this, in part, that led to that of Matthew. In his case, however, there was, also, the proclamation of His indifference to outward distinctions, or rules, afterwards formulated by Peter, who had never forgotten the lesson, into the memorable words—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but, in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him."[51] A truth evident enough to-day, but carrying with it, when inaugurated by Jesus, an entire revolution in the religious history of mankind.

[51] Acts 10. 35.

The divine charity that ran so counter to the narrow pride of the Rabbis was no less startling to the disciples of John, but there were other difficulties to both. No open breach had yet taken place, and a friendly conference might explain much. Jesus had silently left the harsh discipline of fasting behind, and had prescribed no formal rules for prayer,[1] such as were common to the Rabbis and their disciples, and to those of the Baptist; and now a deputation came to ask Him for an explanation.[m] The law of Moses had appointed only one fast in the year, on the Day of Atonement, but the Rabbis had added many, both public and private. They enjoined one for the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and others for various incidents connected with the siege, or the troubles of the first period after the Captivity. There was another to lament the day on which the translation of the Scriptures into Greek had been finished,

and every public calamity or emergency was signalized by a fast specially enjoined by the authorities. It was rather to private fasts, however, that allusion was made. Strict Pharisees, aiming at the highest degree of merit, fasted voluntarily every Monday and Thursday, to commemorate, respectively, the going up of Moses to the Mount on the fifth day, to receive the renewed tables of the Commandments, and his descent on the second. They often added other fasts,[52] to have lucky dreams, and to obtain their interpretation, for, like the Essenes, the Pharisees looked on fasts as a preparation for receiving revelations. They fasted also to avert evil, or to procure some good. Mortification and self-infliction had become a formal religious merit, in the mercenary theology of the day, and was paraded before the world by some, to heighten their reputation for holiness.[53] The idea had, at first, risen from a fancied opposition between the body and the soul; as if the latter could be duly raised only by depressing the former. But asceticism was contrary to the genius of the new kingdom of God, which laid no stress on meat, or drink, or abstinence from them, but on "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[54]

Even prayer had been reduced to a mechanical system, as part of "the hedge of the Law," invented by the Rabbis. No one could lay greater stress on it than Jesus, when offered as the utterance of contrite humility; but, as a part of a system of merit like the Rabbinical theology of the day, He held it lightly. No precepts could be more worthy than many found, even yet, in the Rabbis, respecting the true worth of prayer;[n] but, in practice, these higher teachings had fallen into wide disuse. It had come to be tedious for length, and abounded in repetitions.[55] Fixed rules for correct prayer were taught, with fixed hours, and prescribed forms, and superstitious power was assigned to the mere words. The householder was to repeat the Sch'ma in his house each evening, to drive away evil spirits. To say it when in bed was like grasping a two-edged sword, to slay the assaulting demons.[56] The mere form of prayer, if repeated rightly and often, was counted as merit laid up in

[52] Sepp, ii. 310. Winer, Fasten. Nork, 59. Lightfoot, ii. 170.

[53] Matt. 6. 16.

[54] Rom. 14. 17.

[55] Gfrörer, ii. 145. Matt 6. 7.

[56] Berachoth, Bab. 4 b. Berachoth, Jerus. 4 a.

CHAP. XXXIV. heaven. To repeat the Sch'ma was, in fact, in the phrase of the Rabbis, "to make the kingdom of Heaven one's own."[57]

[57] Gfrörer, ii. 143.

It could not be doubtful how Jesus would bear Himself to views so opposed to inner and spiritual religion. Silently omitting any reference to the objection respecting prayer, He addressed Himself to the question of fasting. "His presence with His disciples was like that of a bridegroom with his companions, during the marriage rejoicings.[58] Could He ask them to fast while He was with them? It would be time for them to do so when He was taken away from them. They would fast then!" Seizing the opportunity, and addressing the disciples of John especially, He went even further. "John had sought to do what was worse than hopeless—to renew the old theocracy, by merely external reform; to patch up the old and torn robe of Judaism, and make it serve a new age. It was as vain as a man's sewing a piece of raw unteazled cloth on the rent of an old garment; the patch could only tear off so much more, and make the rent worse, while the patch would itself be a mere shred. Or, it was like putting new wine into old skins, which must burst when the wine fermented.[o] New teaching, like His, must be put into new bottles; the forms and rites that had served till now were of no more use: a new dispensation had come, which these forms would only cumber.[59] New forms were needed for the new religious life He came to introduce."

[58] Winer, Ehe, i. 60. Lightfoot, ii. 171.

[o] Matt. 9. 15—17. Mark 2. 19—22. Luke 5. 34—39.

[59] Bibel Lex. iii. 274. Schenkel, 42. Reynolds' John the Baptist, 413. Hausrath, i. 373.

Words so fatal to cherished prejudices must have struck deep, but the hearts He had unavoidably wounded were not left without tender soothing. "It was no wonder that John had clung to the faith of his fathers, even in its outward accidents. He had drunk of the old wine, and would not change it for new, contented to know that 'the old was good.'" Henceforth, however, the position of Jesus to the worn-out forms of the past was unmistakable. He had chosen His path, and would lead mankind from the bondage of the letter to the freedom of the spirit, and the worshippers of the letter arrayed themselves against Him. As became the founder of the first religion of the spirit alone, the world

had seen, He henceforth silently ignored the ceremonial law, avoiding open condemnation, but bearing Himself towards it throughout, as He did in the matter of circumcision, which He never enforced on His disciples, or demanded from believing heathen, and never commended, though He never, in words, condemned it. The whole ritual system, of which it was the most prominent feature, was treated as merely indifferent.[60]

[60] Schenkel, 86.

It is indescribably touching to see, at the very threshold of our Lord's public life, that even when He uses so joyous an image of Himself as that of a bridegroom, He dashes-in the picture with shadow. He had begun His course by the Temptation, but from it till the close, His path lay through struggle, suffering, and self-sacrifice, to a far other glory than that which the world expected in the Messiah. He would, indeed, have known His nation, and their Roman masters, the dominant Pharisees, and the priesthood, badly, not to have foreseen, from the first, that He would have to pass through the fiercest conflict, only to reach a tragic end. Thoughts of self-denial, self-sacrifice, even to the surrender of life; of losing life that He might gain it; of the corn dying that it might bring forth fruit, run like a dark thread through all His discourses, to the very end. He sends His apostles forth like sheep amongst wolves; foretells their suffering the bitterest persecution; and consoles them only with the one thought that it should content the disciple to be on the same footing with Himself.[61] In the sermon on the Mount, He predicts that all who believe on Him will suffer hatred and evil treatment.[62] He recognizes those only as His true followers who, denying themselves, take up His cross and bear it.[63] He has nothing to promise His disciples but that they should be servants, submitting patiently to the extremest wrong, and has no higher vision even for Himself.[64] He may rejoice as the bridegroom with His friends, for a time, but will soon be taken away from them.[65] A kingdom founded on such a basis of deliberate self-denial and self-sacrifice, is unique in the history of the world.

[61] Matt. 10. 16—25.

[62] Matt. 5. 10—12.

[63] Mark 8. 34, 35. Matt. 10. 38, 39.

[64] Matt. 9. 15.

[65] Ullmann, 112.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE CHOICE OF THE TWELVE, AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

CHAP. XXXV.

HOW long Jesus remained at Capernaum is not told us, but we may readily believe that He was glad to leave it, with its gathering opposition, as soon as possible. It was His centre of action, but the kingdom needed to be proclaimed over the whole land. Preaching was the special agency on which He relied, far more than on any displays of supernatural power. It was by it He designed to work the stupendous spiritual miracle of the new birth of Israel and of Humanity. As the first founder of a religion which had no code of laws, and repudiated force, addressing itself solely to the free convictions of men, the living word and its illustration in His own life, were alone open to Him as means for its diffusion. The hearts and souls must be won over to the highest truth, by persuading the conscience, and thus influencing the will. In these earlier months He took advantage of the facilities of the Synagogue service, to gain the ear of the people, but His preaching was very different from the stereotyped lifelessness of the Rabbis, and excited universal astonishment by its originality, power, and resistless enthusiasm.[1] At a later time, when His "new doctrine" had roused the opposition of the authorities, the use of the synagogues was no longer permitted Him.[2] But, even from the first, He did not confine Himself to fixed times or places. He addressed the people on the shores of the Lake, on the lonely slopes and valleys of the hills, in the streets and market-places of towns and villages, at the crossing points of the public roads, and even in houses;[3] any place, indeed, that offered an audience, was alike to Him. The burden and spirit of His preaching

[1] Mark 1. 22. Luke 4. 16.

[2] Mark 3. 22. Matt. 11. 24. Luke 11. 15. Mark 6. 1. Luke 4. 29.

[3] Mark 2. 13. Matt. 5. 1. Luke 13. 26. Matt. 16. 1; [illegible] 9. Mark [illegible] 1.

may be gathered from the Gospels throughout. He proclaimed Himself the Good Shepherd seeking to bring back the lost sheep to the heavenly fold; to quicken and turn towards God the weak, sinful human will, and to breathe into the soul aspirations after a higher spiritual life, from the fullness of His own perfect example.[4]

To win all, He moved as a man among men, a friend among friends; a helper amongst all who needed help, declining every outward honour or flattery, or even the appearance of either.[5] While advancing the most amazing pretensions as His kingly prerogative, He was, personally, so meek and lowly that He could make this gentle humility a ground for the trust and unembarrassed approach of all who were troubled. Content with obscurity, and leaving to others the struggle for distinction or place, He chose a life so humble that the poorest had no awe of His dignity, but gathered round Him as their special friend. His tastes were in keeping with this simplicity, for He delighted in the society of the lowly, and children clustered in His steps with the natural instinct that detects one who loves them. He was never engrossed by His own affairs, but ever ready to give Himself up to those of others—to counsel them in difficulties, to sympathize with them in their sorrows or joys, and to relieve their sickness or wants.[6] It is His grand peculiarity, that there is a total oblivion of self in His whole life. The enthusiasm of a divine love, in the pure light of which no selfish thought could live, filled His whole soul. He showed abiding sympathy for human weakness,[7] and to cheer the outcast and hopeless, He announced that He came to seek such as to others seemed lost. In His joy over a sinner won back to righteousness He hears even the angels of God rejoicing.

There had never appeared in any age such a man, such a friend, or such a helper. He seemed the contrast of a king or prince, and yet all His words were kingly; all His acts a succession of the kingliest deeds, decisions, and commands, and His whole public life, the silent and yet truest foundation of an everlasting kingdom. He must, indeed, have seemed anything rather than the founder of a new society,

[4] Bibel Lex. ii. 396.

[5] Mark 10. 17.

[6] Ecce Homo, 178.

[7] Mark 14. 38.

CHAP. XXXV.

or of a new empire, and it must have startled men when they found that He had, by His works and life, established in the midst of the old theocracy the framework of the most imperishable and the widest-reaching empire this earth has ever seen; an empire before which all former religious systems were to fade away. But though His absolute self-control was never intermitted, there were times when the claims of the truth, or the service of His kingdom, brought out the full grandeur of His power and kingly greatness. It was thus when He had to meet and confute prejudice and error, or to heal the sick and diseased. At times we shall see Him forced to blame and condemn, but this was only a passing shadow on the clear heaven of His unvarying grace and love. It is impossible to realize such an appearance, but we can imagine it in some measure. The stainless truth and uprightness which filled His whole nature; the exhaustless love and pity, which were the very breath of His spirit; the radiant joy of the bridegroom wedding redeemed humanity; the calm light as of other worlds in His every look, may well account for the deathless love and devotion He inspired in those whom He suffered to follow Him.[8]

The widening success of His work had already required an addition to the small circle of His immediate attendants. But a single accession, like that of Matthew, was, erelong, not enough. It soon became necessary to select a larger number who might be constantly in His company, and receive His instructions, that they might, in due time, go forth to proclaim the kingdom over a wider area than He could Himself reach. Its laws, its morality, its relations to the Old Dispensation, must be taught them, and they must catch His enthusiasm by such a lengthened intercourse in the familiarity of private life, as would kindle[9] in their souls the ideal He presented. That they should follow Him at all would be left to themselves, but the choice would be made by Himself,[10] of such as, on various grounds, He saw fittest. They were to be Apostles,[11] or missionaries, and would have, for their high commission, the organization of the new kingdom of God, first in Israel, and then through the world.

8 Ewald, Geschichte, v. 306, 307.

9 Ewald, v. 404.

10 Mark 3. 13.

11 Luke 6. 13.

To accept such an invitation implied no little enthusiasm. No earthly reward was held out, but, on the contrary, the sacrifice of all personal claims was demanded. They were to abandon their former calling, whatever it might be, with all its present or prospective advantages, to give up all family ties, to bear the worst indignities and ill-treatment, and yet repress even just resentment. They were to hold their lives at His service, and willingly yield them, if it required the sacrifice.[12] A measure of self-restriction is implied as the basis of any state, for no society could flourish where its interests, as a whole, are not spontaneously considered before those of the individual citizen. But the self-abnegation required by Jesus in those admitted to that which He was now founding, was without a parallel, for while earthly states return an equivalent, in many ways, for the self-surrender they impose, He proclaimed from the first that those who joined His kingdom must do so "hoping for nothing again" to compensate for any self-sacrifice, even the greatest. In the case of the "Apostles," the self-surrender was not merely contingent, but present and final, for He held before them no prospect through life but privation and persecution, and even possible martyrdom. In the next world, indeed, He promised rewards, but He precluded mere mercenary hopes even of these, by making them conditional on unfeigned sincerity in the obedience to His laws and love of His person. The mere hypocrite—or actor—could have no object in joining Him, and was indignantly denounced. The truest honesty in word and deed were alone accepted, and the want of it, in any degree, was the one fatal moral defect.[13]

[12] Ecce Homo, 120.

[13] Ecce Homo, 122.

It is not surprising, therefore, that all who offered themselves as His followers were not accepted. Where He saw unfitness, He repelled advances. To a Rabbi who came saluting Him as "Teacher," and professing his willingness to follow Him as His disciple, He returned the discouraging answer, that the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man—the Messiah[a]—had not where to lay His head.[14] It might have seemed of moment to secure the support of a Rabbi, but Jesus had seen the worldly bent

[14] Matt. 8. 19.

CHAP. XXXV.

of his thoughts, and thus turned him aside, by blasting any hopes of advantage or honour in joining Him. Even indecision or hesitation, whatever the ground, was fatal to admittance to His favour. The request of a disciple to go first and bury his father, before finally following Him, was only met by the command to follow Him at once, and leave the spiritually dead to bury the corporeally dead: to put off decision, even for so worthy a cause as desire to perform the last offices to a father, was dangerous! "Go, thou, and preach the kingdom of God."[15] The devotion due to it, unreservedly, could not be shared, even by the claims of affection and earthly duties." A request to be allowed to bid his household farewell, before finally leaving them, was met by a similar answer—"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."[16] The indispensable condition of admittance into the inner circle who followed and lived with Him, was an engrossing enthusiasm for Himself and His work, which permitted concern for no second interest whatever.[17]

He had determined to surround Himself with a small body of such trustworthy followers, limiting the number, by an association natural to His race, to twelve. They were to form the closest, inmost circle of His disciples, and to be, in fact, His friends and companions. He would give them His fullest confidence: open His mind to them more fully than to others: and, by living among them, inspire them with His own fervour, and mould them to His own likeness. They would see how His soul never unbent from its grand enthusiasm: how He never wearied in His transcendent devotion of body and spirit to His work. In seeing and hearing Him, they would gain experience: in the opposition and trials they met in His company, their fidelity would be put to the test, and, in the end, they would be qualified for the special work for which they had been chosen—to be sent forth to preach, and to repeat the miraculous works of their Master, as evidence of His divine authority.[18]

It is not stated definitely where the selection of the Apostles was made. His preaching had already gained a "great multitude"[19] of disciples, who followed Him in His

[15] Luke 9. 60.

[16] Luke 9. 62.

[17] Ewald, v. 391.

[18] Mark 3. 14.

[19] Luke 6. 17. So the Sinaitic and the Vatican MSS.

journey from town to town, along with a vast crowd drawn after Him by various motives. The movement was rapidly assuming an importance like that of John's; it was extending over the nation. Withdrawing Himself, as was His frequent custom, from the throng, by night, He retired once more into the hills to pray, and continued in devotion till morning.[20] Brought up among hills, He was ever fond of their solitude, their pure air and open sky, which seemed to bring Him nearer His Father. It was somewhere, apparently, in the hilly background of the Sea of Galilee, for though spoken of as "the mountain," there are no means of deciding the precise locality. When the day broke, instead of seeking rest, He showed the subject of His night-long communion with His Heavenly Father, by proceeding to select His future Apostles. The crowd of His disciples had returned with the new day, from the neighbouring towns and villages where they had spent the night, when Jesus, coming down from His solitary devotions, gathered them once more round Him, and "calling to Him whom He Himself would," "appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He should send them forth to preach—to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." [21]

[20] Luke 6. 12.

[21] Mark 3. 13, 14.

His choice was necessarily made from a comparatively small number, for the majority must have lately joined Him, and must thus have been, as yet, little known.[22] So far as possible He made His selection from those who had been longest with Him, and whom He had, in some measure, proved; but they were as a whole, simple, unlearned, plastic men of the people, for Jesus had already seen that the spiritual regeneration of Israel must rise from the humbler classes.[23] He knew that the educated men of the nation, the Rabbis and priests, were perverted and prejudiced, and He could not look to the officials or authorities of any grade, or to the prevailing religious schools. The commonalty were sounder, freer from the errors of the age,—more open to the eternal truths He came to announce, and more ready to accept the spiritual kingdom He came to found.[24] Yet, it may be, that had the choice been wider, some one might have been available from the trained intellects of the nation, with

[22] Schenkel, 76.

[23] Matt. 11. 25. Winer, Apostel.

[24] Hase, 149.

CHAP. XXXV.

results it would be vain to conjecture. Had Paul been one of the twelve, now chosen by Christ, how much might the genius, the Rabbinical training, the breadth of mind, and the grand loving enthusiasm which almost founded Western Christianity, have changed, in the history told by the Gospels? He laid no stress on their former social position, or religious party, for they included, on the one side, a publican, who was also a Levite, and on the other, one who had belonged to the ultra-puritan zealots, the fanatical party of Judas the Galilæan. Nor did He require them to be unmarried, for Peter, we know, had a wife, and if we may trust the tradition of the Armenian Church, the only Apostles who were single were the sons of Zebedee,[b] and Thomas.[25] The Capernaum circle yielded Him no fewer than seven of the twelve,—Peter, and his brother Andrew, who lived with him; two sons from the house of Zabdai,—James and John; two sons of Alphæus,[c]—James the Little, and Jude, who is commonly distinguished as Lebbæus, the stout-hearted,—or Thaddæus, the brave.[26] The publican Matthew was also from Capernaum, and was the third from the household of Alphæus, if the name refer to the father of James the Little and Jude; and Philip belonged to the village of Bethsaida in its immediate neighbourhood, making in all, eight of the twelve, virtually from the same favoured place. Of the remaining four, Nathanael, the son of Talmai, the Bartholomew of our version, was from Cana, on the north side of the plain of El Battauf, on which Jesus had so often looked down from the Nazareth hill-top. Thomas—ready to die, but slow to believe: manly and full of grave tenderness, —whose Hebrew name[27] was sometimes turned into the Greek equivalent Didymus, the twin,—was the same person, —one tradition says,—as Judas, the brother of Jesus, as if Mary had had a double birth, after bearing her eldest son.[28] If so, one of the household amongst whom our Saviour had grown up, one son of His mother, redeemed the general coldness of the rest. The name of Simon the Zealot, another Galilæan, and that of the only Apostle from Judea,—Judas, the traitor, of the village of Kerioth,[29] in the south of Juda—close the list.

[25] Ewald, v. 395.

[26] John 14. 22. Hausrath, i. 386.

[27] תָּאָם (tāam), a twin; תְּאֹמָא (tōma), Δίδυμος, Didymus—a twin.

[28] Thilo ad Acta Thom. 94.

[29] אִישׁ קְרִיּוֹת (Ish Kĕrioth), the man of Kerioth.

Such was the band which Jesus now gathered round Him. At least four,—James and John, and James the Little and Jude,—seem to have been His relations, or connections, to whom, if we accept the tradition I have quoted, we must add Thomas.[d] One, at least, was of priestly race,—the degenerate Levite, Matthew, who had sunk to an office held so utterly infamous as a publican's. He and the sons of Zebedee seem to have been in a fair position; but Peter, whom we see in the forty days after the Resurrection, once more busy as a fisherman, in his boat on the Lake of Galilee; naked, perhaps literally, as the fishermen there still often are,[e] that he might the better, like them, drag the net after him through the water, as he swam with it; or casting his fisher's coat round him, and leaping into the Lake to swim ashore to Jesus,[30] is, it may be, a fair illustration of the social position of most of his brethren in the Apostolate.

[30] John 21. 7.

In the lists given in the Gospels, Peter, the host of his Lord, at Capernaum, always holds the first place, but there are variations in the order assigned to others. A true Galilæan—Peter was energetic and fiery, rather than self-contained and reflective. Warm-hearted and impulsive, he had at once the strength and weakness of such a temperament. He is always the first to speak for his brethren; he craves earnestly one moment what he as earnestly refused the moment before; he is the first to draw the sword for Jesus, but also the first to deny Him. John recognizes his risen Master first at the Lake of Galilee, but Peter throws himself forthwith into the Lake, and is the first to reach Jesus' feet; he acts on the moment, and has even to be rebuked for being too ready with his counsel. Though for a moment he denies Christ, a look melts him, and tradition only fills up what we feel a true picture, when it tells us that he rose each night, through life, at the hour at which he had sinned so weakly, to pray for forgiveness; or when it speaks of him, at last, as crucified with his head downwards, thinking himself unworthy of a nearer approach to the death of his Lord.

In Peter, Jesus had an apostle who gave up his whole being to his Master. No one was more receptive of lofty impressions, and with this moral sensibility, there was a

CHAP. XXXV.

ready, quick, happy insight, which divined the significance of his Master's words with swift intelligence. Yet, with this delicacy of forecast, and true conception of the inner and the expressed thoughts of Jesus; with his quick eye for the signs of the times, and his zeal to act on their indications, he was deficient in sharp logical power of thought, and in tenacious strength of will. In this combination of strength and weakness, he was the most perfect type of the Galilæan in the Apostolate, and became a special friend of Jesus, who found in him the most enthusiastic of His followers; the reflection, in some respects, of His own nature, and a heart than which none beat truer, though in the most decisive moments he proved no firm support, but a bending reed, weak from momentary trust in himself rather than on his Lord.[31]

[31] Keim, ii. 315. Reynolds' John the Baptist, 31. Schenkel, 76.

James and John, the sons of Zabdai, were men of a different mould. They supplied what was wanting in Peter. Ready to accept the new ideas, and reproducing them for themselves, with mingled enthusiasm and freshness of conception, they had the same intense devotion to their Master as Peter, with something, at times, of the same artless and unconscious self-prominence. Their energy of will, and quick flaming up at any opposition, were marked features of both, and obtained for them, from Jesus, the name of "the Sons of Thunder." In their zeal for their Master they would have called down judgment from heaven against an inhospitable village, and wished to silence an unknown worker who spoke in the name of Christ, without belonging to the twelve. In James, the Apostles had their first martyr, but John lived to be the last survivor of them all. Hot zeal, based on intense devotion, was, however, only a passing characteristic, at least of John. He, of all the twelve, drank deepest into his Master's Spirit, and realized it most. Self-contained, meditative, tender, he thought less of Christ's acts, than of the words which were the revelations of His inner Being. His whole spiritual nature gave itself up to loving contemplation of the wondrous life passing before him. We owe to him, in his Gospel, an image of the higher nature of our Lord, such as only one to whom He was all in all could have painted. If perfect love

beget love in return, it was inevitable that John should win the supreme place in Christ's affection. If the disciple leaned on the Master's bosom, it was because he had shown the love that at the last brought him, alone, of the twelve, to the foot of the Cross.[32]

[32] Reynolds, 31. Schenkel, 95. Renan. L'Antechrist, 558. Nork, 117. Hase, 142. Ewald, v. 239

Of Andrew, the brother of Peter, we know very little. We have to trust to tradition, alone, for his history, after Christ's death. He is said, by one legend, to have gone among the Scythians, and, on this ground, the Russians have made him their national Saint. Another assigns Greece, and afterwards Asia Minor and Thrace, as the scene of his work, and speaks of him as put to death in Achaia, on a cross of the form since known by his name. The incidental notices of the others, in the Gospels, are very slight, and need not be anticipated. Philip is said, in the ecclesiastical legends, to have been a chariot driver; Bartholomew, a shepherd, or gardener. But no name is more striking in the list than that of Simon the Zealot,[f] for to none of the twelve could the contrast be so vivid between their former and their new position. What revolution of thought and heart could be greater than that which had thus changed into a follower of Jesus one of the fierce war party of the day, which looked on the presence of Rome in the Holy Land as treason against the Majesty of Jehovah—a party who were fanatical in their Jewish strictness and exclusiveness? Like many others of the twelve, he is little more than a name. Indeed, even in the second century, the vaguest traditions were all that survived of any but two or three of them. They were men of no high commanding powers, to make their names rise on all men's tongues, but they, doubtless, in every case but that of the betrayer, did their work faithfully, and effected results of permanent value in the spread of the Kingdom. Still more, they displayed before the world, for the first time, the then amazing spectacle and teaching of a Christian life. That we know so little of men who were such signal benefactors of the race, is only what we have to ponder in the cases of those to whom the world has owed most.[33] It is the law, in the moral as in the physical world, that one sows and another reaps, and the seed which bears the golden

[33] Newman's Parochial Sermons, ii. 5.

CHAP. XXXV. ears has long died away unremembered, before the gathering of the autumn sheaves.

It is touching to think of Jesus surrounded by the little band He had thus chosen—simple, true-hearted men, indeed, but needing so much to fit them for their amazing honour, and momentous duties. No wonder they were timid and reverent before Him;[34] no wonder that He was so sorely tried with their dull apprehension and weak human shortcomings, as to speak sternly or sadly to them at times; once indeed, with the words, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you?"[g] He calls them "of little understanding," "hardened," "fearful," "worldly," and "of little faith."[35] But amidst all, they "continued with Him in His trials"[36] till the end, and He forgot their failings in the tender thought, that if their flesh was weak, their spirit was willing. They were His "brethren,"[37] His "servants," His "fellow-workers," His "little children," His "little ones," and, even, as the end approached, His "friends." He might, at times, have to reprove them, but His bearing towards them, day by day, was a loving condescension to their weakness, and a patient effort to draw them to Himself, as far as possible. There is no trace of such formal instruction as the Rabbis gave their followers; they had rather to listen to His words to the people, and ask Him in private for explanation where needed.[38] He rather trained and developed their spiritual character, than indoctrinated them in systematic theology.[39] Above all, He lived before them, and was Himself their great lesson. Nor can there be a more striking illustration of the completeness with which they forgot their own being in the presence of their Master, than the silence of the writers of the Gospels respecting themselves in their records of Jesus. He, alone, filled their eye, their thoughts, their hearts. They had been like children before Him, while He was with them, and in the hallowed reverence of their remembered intercourse, His image filled the whole retrospect, to the utter subordination of all things else. The months they had spent in His company under the palm-trees, or on the hills, or by the sea; when they breathed the same air with Him; heard His voice; saw

[34] Matt. 16. 7. John 13. 22; 6. 18.

[35] Mark 4. 13, 40; 6. 52; 8. 17, 18, 21, 33; 9. 6, 19, 32, 34; 10. 24, 32, 35; 14. 40.

[36] Luke 22. 28.

[37] Matt. 25. 40. John 18. 36. Matt. 10. 10. John 13. 33. Matt. 18. 6. John 15. 14, 15.

[38] Mark 7. 17.

[39] Mark 10. 35.

His life; and wondered at His mighty acts,—raised them, in their own belief, above the prophets and the kings, who had longed for such a vision of the Messiah, but had not had it vouchsafed them.[40]

Of the preaching of Jesus, the Gospel preserves numerous fragments, but no lengthened abstract of any single discourse, except that of the "Sermon on the Mount." It seems to have been delivered immediately after the choice of the twelve, to the disciples at large and the multitude who thronged to hear the new Rabbi. Descending from the higher point to which He had called up His Apostles, He came towards the crowd, which waited for Him at a level place below.[41] There were numbers from every part—from Judea and Jerusalem in the south, and even from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon; some to hear Him, others to be cured of their diseases, and many to be delivered from unclean spirits. The commotion and excitement were great at His appearance, for it had been found that to touch Him was to be cured, and, hence, all sought, either by their own efforts, or with the help of friends, to get near enough to Him to do so. After a time, however, the tumult was stayed, all having been healed, and He proceeded, before they broke up, to care for their spiritual, as He had already for their physical wants.

Tradition has chosen the hill known as the "Horns of Hattin,"[42] two horn-like heights, rising sixty feet above the plain between them—two hours west of Tiberias, at the mouth of the gorge which opens, past Magdala, into the wild cliffs of Arbela, famous in the history of the Zealots as their hiding-place, and famous also for Herod's battles in mid-air at the mouths of their caves, by means of great cages filled with soldiers let down the precipices. It is greatly in favour of this site, to find such a writer as Dean Stanley saying, that the situation so strikingly coincides with the intimations of the Gospel narrative, as almost to force the inference, that, in this instance, the eye of those who selected the spot was rightly guided.[43 h] The plain on which the hill stands is easily accessible from the Lake, and it is only a few minutes' walk from it to the summit, before reaching

[40] Luke 10. 24.

[41] Luke 6. 17.

[42] Paulus supposes a hill near Safed, the scene. Die drei ersten Evang. i. 572.

[43] Sinai and Palestine, 360

CHAP. XXXV.

which, a broad "level place" has to be crossed—exactly suited for the gathering of a multitude together. It was to this, apparently, that Jesus came down, from one of the higher horns, to address the people. Seated on some slightly elevated rock—for the teacher always sat while he taught[44]—the people and the disciples sitting at His feet, on the grass; the cloudless Syrian sky over them; the blue Lake, with its moving life, on the one hand, and, in the far north, the grand form of Hermon, glittering in the upper air; He began what is to us the Magna Charta[45] of our faith, and to the hearers must have been the formal inauguration of the new kingdom of God.

[44] Maimonides; quoted by Nork, cxciii.

[45] Tholuck, Bergpredigt, *in loc.*

The choice of the twelve Apostles and the Sermon on the Mount mark a turning point in the public life of Jesus. A crisis in the development of His work had arrived. He had, till now, taken no steps towards a formal and open separation from Judaism, but had contented Himself with gathering converts, whom He left to follow the new life He taught, without any organization as a distinct communion. The symptoms of an approaching rupture with the priests and Rabbis had, however, forced on Him more decisive action. He had met the murmurs at the healing of the paralytic, by the triumphant vindication of the language which had given offence. The choice of a publican as a disciple immediately after, had been a further expression of the fundamental opposition between His ideas and those of the schools and the Temple, and His justification of the disuse by His disciples, of the outward rites and forms which were vital in the eyes of the orthodoxy of the day, had been another step in the same divergent path. He had openly sanctioned the omission of fasts, and of mechanical rules for prayer,[i] which were sacred with the Rabbis. He had even set the old and new order of things in contrast, and had thus assumed independent authority as a religious teacher; the sum of all offence in a rigid theocracy.

The choice of the twelve, and the Sermon on the Mount, were the final and distinct proclamation of His new position. The Apostles must have seemed, to a Jew, the twelve patriarchs of a new spiritual Israel, to be substituted for the

old; the heads of new tribes, to be gathered by their teaching, as the future people of God. The old skins had been proved unfit for the new wine; henceforth, new skins must be provided; new forms, for a new faith. The society thus organized needed a promulgation of the laws under which it was to live, and this it received in the Sermon on the Mount.

The audience addressed consisted of the newly chosen twelve; the unknown crowd who heard Him with favour, and were, hence, spoken of as His disciples;[46] and the promiscuous multitude drawn to Him, for the time, by various motives. Jesus had no outer and inner circle, for public and secret doctrines, like the Rabbis, for, though He explained to the twelve, in private, any points in His discourses they had not understood, the discourses themselves were delivered to all who came to hear them. This Sermon, which is the fullest statement we have of the nature of His kingdom, and of the condition and duties of its citizenship, was spoken under the open sky, to all who happened to form His audience.

[46] Grotius. on Matt. 12. 49.

In this great declaration of the principles and laws of the Christian republic—a republic in the relations of its citizens to each other—a kingdom, in their relations to Jesus, the omissions are no less striking than the demands. There is no reference to the priests or Rabbis—till then the undisputed authorities in religion—nor is the rite of circumcision even mentioned, though it made the Jew a member of the Old Covenant, as a mere theocratic form, apart from moral requirements. It is not condemned, but it is ignored. Till now, a vital condition of entrance into the kingdom of God, it is so no more. Nor are any other outward forms more in favour. The new kingdom is to be founded only on righteousness and love, and contrasts with the old by its spiritual freedom, untrammeled by outward rules. It opposes to the nationality and limitation of the old theocracy a universal invitation, with no restriction except that of character and conduct. Citizenship is offered to all who sincerely believe in Jesus as the Messiah, and honestly repent before God. Even the few opening sentences mark

CHAP. XXXV.

the revolution in religious conceptions which the new faith involves. Temporal evil, which, under the former dispensation had been the mark of divine displeasure, became, in the teaching of Jesus, the mark of fellowship and pledge of heavenly reward. The opinion of the day regarded poverty, hunger, trouble, and persecution as punishments for sin: He enumerates them as blessings. Throughout the whole Sermon, no political or theocratic ideas find place, but only spiritual. For the first time in the history of religion, a communion is founded without a priesthood, or offerings, or a Temple, or ceremonial services; without symbolical worship, or a visible sanctuary. There is an utter absence of everything external or sensuous: the grand spiritual truths of absolute religious freedom, love, and righteousness, alone are heard. Nor is the kingdom, thus founded, in itself visible, or corporate, in any ordinary sense; it is manifested only by the witness of the Spirit in the heart, and by the power going forth from it in the life.[47] In the fine words of Herder,[48] Christianity was founded in direct opposition to the stupid dependence on customs, formulæ, and empty usages. It humbled the Jewish, and even the Roman national pride: the moribund Levitical worship and idolatry, however fanatically defended, were wounded to death.

Nothing can be more certain than that Jesus had never studied under the Sopherim, or Scribes. His contemporaries, the Rabbis of Jerusalem, leave no doubt of this, for they frankly avowed their wonder at His knowledge of their theology, and power of Scriptural exposition, though He had never learned theological science in their schools.[49] The same minute acquaintance with the opinions and teachings of the day is seen through the whole of the Hill Sermon. Apart from His mysterious divinity, He was a man like ourselves, "growing in wisdom" with His years, and, therefore, indebted in a measure, at least, to the influences and means around Him, for His human knowledge and opinions. It speaks volumes for His early training by His mother and Joseph, that He should have known the Scriptures as He did, for it is in childhood that the memory gets the bent which marks its strength in manhood. The synagogue

[47] Schenkel, Gemeinde, Bibel Lex. ii. 376.

[48] Geist des Christenthums, 95.

[49] John 7. 15. Matt. 13. 54.

school, and constantly recurring services, must, however, have been the great seminary of the wondrous Boy. Passages of the Law had been His only school-book, and, doubtless, the village teacher, steeped in reflected Rabbinism, had often flattered his harmless vanity by a display before his young charge, of his knowledge of the traditions and glosses, which won so much honour to the Scribes. The Sabbath and week-day homilies of the Synagogue had made Him a constant listener to local or travelling Rabbis, till, in the thirty years of His Nazareth life, His mind and memory had, doubtless, been saturated with their modes of thought, and the opinions of all the different schools. Theology, moreover, was the staple of village conversation in Nazareth, as elsewhere, for his religion was also the politics of the Jew, and the justification of his haughty national pride. Doubtless, also, in Joseph's cottage there was a manuscript of the Law, and a soul filled with devotion to His Heavenly Father, like that of Jesus, would find some of the Prophets, either there or among His family friends. Rabbis from Jerusalem, or resident in Galilee, must often have come in His way, during the thirty private years, and how much would such a mind and heart learn of their "wisdom," even in such casual intercourse? His clearness of intellect, His transparent innocence of soul, His freedom of spirit, and transcendent loftiness of morals were all His own, but they must have used, for their high ends, the facilities around Him. The very neighbourhood of a heathen population may have had its influence in breaking down the hereditary narrowness of His race, and who can tell what ardours may have been kindled by the wondrous view from the hill-top of Nazareth? Free from all thought of Himself: filled with a divine enthusiasm for His Father above and for humanity, these mountains, that azure sky, the sweeping table-land beyond the Jordan, the wide glory of heaven and earth, veiling, above, the eternal kingdoms, and, at His feet, revealing the enchanting homes of wide populations differing in blood and in faith, but all alike His brethren, may have coloured not a few of the sacred utterances of the Sermon on the Mount.

CHAP. XXXV.

This unique example of our Saviour's teaching displays in one view nearly all the characteristics presented by the more detached illustrations preserved in the Gospels. Never systematic, the discourses of Jesus were rather pointed utterances of special truths demanded by the occasion. In perfect inner harmony with each other, these sententious teachings at times appear to conflict, for they are often designed to present opposite sides of the same truth, as the distinct point to be met required.[50] The external and sensuous in all His teachings, however, was always made the vehicle of an inner and heavenly lesson. He necessarily followed the mode to which His hearers were used, and taught them as their own Rabbis were wont, that He might engage attention. At times He puts direct questions; at others He is rhetorical or polemic, or speaks in proverbs, or in more lengthened discourse. He often uses parables, and sometimes even symbolical actions;[51] is always spontaneous and ready[52]; and even, at times, points His words by friendly or cutting irony.[53] But while thus in many ways adopting the style of the Rabbis, His teaching was very different even in outward characteristics. They delivered, painfully, what they had learned like children, overlaying every address with citations, in their fear of saying a word of their own; but the teaching of Christ was the free expression of His own thoughts and feelings, and this, with the weight of the teaching itself, gave Him power over the hearts of His audience.[54] With a minute and exact knowledge of the teaching of the schools, He shows, by repeated use of Rabbinical proofs and arguments, that He was familiar, also, with the current modes of controversy. His fervour, His originality, and the grandeur of the truths He proclaimed, were enough in themselves to commend His words, but He constantly supports them by the supreme authority of the Scriptures, which were familiar to Him as His mother-speech. Simple, as a rule, in all He says, He yet often opens glimpses into the infinite heights, where no human thought can follow Him. The spirit of His preaching is as transcendent as its matter. Tenderness and yearning love prevail, but there is not wanting, when needed, the stern-

[50] John 5. 31; 8. 14. Luke 9. 50; 11. 23. Matt. 9. 17; 13. 52.

[51] John 13. 4.

[52] Matt. 4. 19; 8. 22; 12. 49. Luke 8. 21; 11. 27.

[53] Luke 7. 47. Mark 7. 9. Luke 13. 33.

[54] Matt. 7. 28. Mark 1. 22. John 7. 46

ness of the righteous judge. Throughout the whole of His ministry, and notably, in the Sermon on the Mount, He bears Himself with a kingly grandeur, dispensing the rewards and punishments of the world to come; opening the kingdom of heaven to those only who fulfil His requirements, and resting the future prospects of men on the reception they give His words. Even to read His utterances forces from all the confession of those who heard Him, that "Never man spake like this."

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (CONTINUED).

CHAP. XXXVI.

THE opening verses of the Sermon on the Mount mark the contrast between the New Kingdom of God and the Old. There is no mention of forms, for the whole life of Jesus was one unbroken service of God.[1] The Temple Service, and the burdensome laws of sacrifices, are passed over, for the Sermon was delivered in Galilee, far from the splendour of the one, or the vexatious minuteness and materialism of the other. The great question of clean and unclean, which divided the nation within itself; made life a slavery to rules; and isolated the Jew from all brotherhood with humanity at large, is left to sink into indifference before the grand spiritual truths enunciated. The Law came with threats, prohibitions, and commands; the "Sermon" opens with benedictions, and moves in an atmosphere of promises and enticements.[2] Its first sentences are a succession of lofty congratulations of those whose spirit and bearing already proclaim them fit for the new society.

The virtues thus praised are not the active only, but the passive; not those of doing alone, but of bearing. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; blessed the meek, for they will inherit the earth; blessed they that mourn, for they will be comforted; blessed they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be satisfied; blessed the merciful, for they will find mercy; blessed the peace-makers, for they will be called sons of God; blessed they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye, when they shall reproach and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My

[1] Bibel Lex. ii. 525.

[2] Luther, quoted by Meyer. Matt. *in loc.*

sake. Rejoice and exult, for your reward is great in Heaven; for so did they persecute the prophets that were before you."[3a]

[3a] Matt. 5. 3—12. I give the version of Tischendorf.

The mission of Christ was said by Himself, in a quotation from Isaiah, to be to preach to the poor, and hence it is with no surprise that we find St. Luke substitute simply "the poor" for the "poor in spirit," for both are right. The first disciples were won almost exclusively from among the lowly. "The contented poor," Jesus would here say, "who bear their burden meekly, since it comes from God, those—that is, who are 'poor in spirit,'—have, in their very meekness, the sign and proof that, though poor in outward things, they are rich in higher, for they will, so much the more surely, be, hereafter, the opposite of what they are here. They are the poor who have nothing and yet have all. They have nothing of this world's possessions, and have not yet received the blessing in the world to come. But the very longing for the future, and hope of it, are virtually a present possession. Their devout poverty is their wealth, for it secures treasures hereafter.[4] The 'Kingdom of Heaven' *is* theirs already." This principle runs through all the beatitudes. As Christ's disciples, the future will be the contrast to the present; riches for poverty; joy for mourning; plenty for hunger; a heavenly crown for earthly suffering for the Master's sake. The contrast of sin and pardon; the lowly sense of needed salvation, which already has in itself the assurance that salvation is granted, are implied in all the states of heart recounted. Through all, there runs the deepest sense of the sinfulness and troubles of the present, and springing from this, the loftiest religious aspirations, rising far above the earth, to eternal realities. They thus disclose the inmost and central principle of the new Kingdom; the willing and even joyful surrender of the present, in lowly hope of the future—and that from no lower motive than loving obedience and fidelity to Christ. Immediate self-interest is to be disregarded, for the infinitely higher prospects of the future world. The one passion of the heart is to be for greater righteousness,—that is, for an ever more complete self-surrender to the will of God, and active

[4] Baur's Geschichte, 27

fulfilment of its demands. For Himself Jesus claims the most loyal devotion, even to the endurance of "all manner of evil," for His sake. To seek happiness is to fail to obtain it, but self-surrender to God, and faith in Christ as the Messiah, in themselves bring it, when disinterested and sincere.

It is striking to note the anticipations of suffering associated by Jesus with true discipleship.[5] Suffering is assumed as its inevitable result. He holds out no attractions to insincerity or worldliness, but at the very outset, fans the chaff from the wheat, and repels all but the earnest and devoted.

[5] See Ullmann's Sündlosigkeit, 112.

Four benedictions are bestowed on the passive virtues; four on the active. To bear poverty with lowly resignation to God; to mourn, and yet trust that all is for the best; to reproduce the meekness which Jesus Himself displayed, and to endure trials and persecutions loyally for His sake, are the negative graces demanded as conditions of membership of the New Kingdom. But active virtues are no less required; the hungering and thirsting after righteousness, which finds its food in fresh, joyful, continuous acts of goodness; the mercy which delights to bless the wretched; the purity of heart, which strives to realize in the soul the image of God, and the gentleness which spreads peace around it.[b]

The key-note of all the utterances of Christ reveals itself in these few sentences. His kingdom is at once present and future: present by the undoubting faith in His assurances that it would hereafter assuredly be attained: future in the fact that the realization of its joys was reserved for the life to come. Unlike John, He proclaims that the time of expectation is over: that the New Kingdom has already come as a living power in the soul, diffusing its blessings, at once within and around its members. It is established in its rights and duties, to develop and advance, henceforth, till its glory cover the earth. In one aspect, it is incomplete till its full realization in the distant future: in another it is already perfect, for it reigns in every single soul which has humbly accepted Jesus as its King.

After this introduction, He proceeds to enforce on His disciples the duties of their new relation to Him, and to

cheer them, by recalling the dignity it confers. "You have, indeed, good cause to rejoice," says He, "and to be brave of heart, for you are the salt of the earth; the light of the world; a city set on a hill." Mere ostentation, or insincere parade of virtue, were abhorrent to Him, and formed His great charge against the acted religion of the day. But the enthusiasm of true goodness, He tells them, must of necessity be seen and felt. Life is shown by its energy; where there is no active vital power, there is only death. He prescribes no lengthened code of duties, but trusts to the ardour and devotion of loyalty to Himself, as a perfect equivalent. Drawn to Him by grateful and lowly affection, He leaves it to the love of His followers to exceed all precise directions, and outstrip all formal requirements. His kingdom is as strictly under law as any other, but, for the endless statutes of earthly monarchies, and the equally unnumbered prescriptions of the old theocracy, He substitutes a single all-sufficing law—the law of love, which makes each member of His kingdom a law to himself. All are to give themselves up to Him as unreservedly as He has given Himself up for them.

Intense sincerity is thus made the fundamental demand, and His own personal example their standard and pattern. To be the light of the world, they must needs look to Him, for He had especially applied that name to Himself.[6] They had the immense advantage of example, so much more effective than precept. The New Kingdom was only the reflection of His own character, and, thus, His commands were best carried out by imitating His life; for He, Himself, was the one perfect illustration of complete fulfilment of its laws. No grudging or partial devotion would suffice. They must heartily conform their inmost being to His image,[7] and shed round them, in their respective spheres, the spiritual blessings which beamed brightest from Himself. Thus calmly, and as His natural right and place, He constitutes Himself the grand ideal of humanity, and men feel that there is no rashness or incongruity in His assumption of the stupendous dignity.

Failure, however, is human, and hence a few solemn

[6] John 8. 12.

[7] Ullmann, 228

CHAP. XXXVI. words of warning are added. "Salt keeps and makes sound what would else corrupt. But impure salt may lose its saltness, and once lost it cannot be restored. What was before of blessed use, is, henceforth, worthless, and may be cast out upon the road to be trodden under foot. If you, the salt of the earth,[c] lose your spiritual worth, by faint-heartedness, or sloth, or dark unfaithfulness, your needed energy and efficiency are irreparably gone. Who will take your place? You will be no longer fit for the work I have assigned you. If the salt be pure, it will not lose its power; it is the earth and impurities mixed with it, that make it worthless; and so you must put away all that might make you go back, if you would be true disciples. Your lasting worth depends on your devotion to me being unqualified and absolute.[8] You are to enlighten men as the sun enlightens the world. I am the light of the world: you shine by my light: see that, in turn, you illumine the darkness round you. A light is to shine, not to be hidden. Like a lamp on its stand, it is your office to shed light, and drive off darkness. The beams of your good works must shine before men, that they may honour God, your Father, in Heaven. Like a city set on a hill, you are to draw on you all eyes."

[8] See Luke 14. 33. Matt. 5. 13—16.

Passing from general principles to specific details, Jesus now proceeded to show the relations of His new kingdom to the old theocracy.[9] The charge of hostility to the Law had been brought against Him, and would be urged against His disciples.[10] He would show them that the new roots itself in the old, and is its completion and glory, not its destruction.

[9] Matt. 5. 17—48.

[10] Acts 6. 11.

"Think not," said He, "that I came to supersede your ancient Scriptures—the Law and the Prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. Worthless forms, worn out with age, may perish and must, but not the least jot or tittle of the sacred truths they for a time have clothed, shall pass, while heaven or earth endure. The forms are not the Law. Rites and ceremonies are only helps, for simple ages, which need material symbols. The kingdom of God has now outgrown them. The truth must henceforth stand alone, appealing to the spirit without such outward aids. Local and national,

they have served their day, but the new kingdom of God, which is for all times and races, knows only a worship in spirit and in truth. So far am I from slighting or destroying the truth hidden under these outward forms, that he who breaks one of the least spiritual demands of the Law, and teaches men to copy him in doing so, shall be called least in my kingdom: while he who obeys and teaches them as a whole, shall be called great in it. The Law is for ever sacred. I strip it only of its outward accidents, to reveal the better its divine glory. Spoken by God, it is eternal. I come to do it honour; to confirm, but also to clear it from human additions and corruptions."

Jesus, in thus speaking, had a very different conception of the Law from that of the Rabbis. To Him it meant the sacred moral commands given from Sinai. The whole apparatus of ceremony and rite at first connected with them, were only rude external accommodations to the childhood of religion, to aid the simple and gross ideas of early ages. Looking beneath the symbol to the essential truth, it was a lofty, religious, moral, and social legislation, far deeper, wiser, holier, and more complete than the highest human system. He knew how the prophets had drawn from it the pure and exalted conceptions they had enforced, anticipating in their spirituality His own teaching. But centuries lay between Him and the prophets, and Judaism had sunk to a painful idolatry of the letter and outward form of the Law, to the neglect of its spirit and substance. The Exile had weakened and perverted the national conscience, and a burning zeal for rigid external observance of the letter had followed the just belief that their national troubles had been a punishment for previous shortcomings.

The Pharisees, who gave the tone to the people, filled up their life with a weary round of offerings, ceremonies, and purifications; and, not content with the prescriptions of Moses, had added a tedious system of meritorious works; fasts, washings, alms, and prayers. The Essenes, and still more John, had turned back to the purer air of the prophets, from this barren, mechanical piety, and had taught that righteousness, love, and human sympathy, were the highest

CHAP. XXXVI.

requirements of the Law. But the veil was still on their eyes; their reforms were partial. The Essenes had even more washings than the Pharisees; they eschewed marriage, property, and the world, and the Baptist fasted, and required Pharisaic forms.[11] Jesus pierced to the heart of the truth. Stripping off all obsolete wrappings of rite and symbol, and repudiating all human additions, He proclaimed the Law in its divine ideal, as binding for ever, in its least part,[d] on all ages.

[11] Keim's Christus, 87. Schleiermacher's Predigten, iv. 508, 704. Reynolds' John the Baptist, 499.

His supreme loyalty to the Law could not fail, in a spirit so divinely sincere, to involve a condemnation of its corruption by the religious teachers of the day. It followed presently: "Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees," He continued, "ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." He charges them, not only with themselves breaking the commandments, by their casuistry and their immoral additions, but with leading men at large in the same evil path.

The fundamental principle of the Pharisaic conception of righteousness which Jesus thus strenuously opposed, was their idea that strict observance of the traditions and commands of their schools in itself satisfied the requirements of God. Fulfilment of what was written in the Law and its Rabbinical expositions, was, in their opinion, only a question of punctilious outward observance. They weakened the conception of moral evil by subtle discriminations of casuistry.[12] In trifles the most exact minuteness was required, but in greater matters the principles of morality were boldly undermined or surrendered. The tithing of mint, dill, and cummin—mere garden herbs—was vital, but grave questions of right and wrong were treated with indifference. This moral prudery and pedantry, which strained the wine before drinking it, lest a fly might have fallen into it and made it unclean, but made no trouble of swallowing a camel,[13] was the hypocritical righteousness against which Jesus directed His bitterest words.[14] With all their lip veneration for it, they set little value on the study of the Law itself, but much on that of the commentaries of the Rabbis, now embodied in the Mischna and Gemara.[15] The

[12] Schenkel, Bibel Lex. ii. 397.

[13] Matt. 23. 24.

[14] Matt. 23. 13, 28.

[15] Quotation from Baba Mezia, in Cohen, 158.

Rabbinical tradition so amplified and twisted the words of the Law, as to make it express, in many cases, the opposite of its natural meaning.[16] Religion had become almost wholly a mechanical service, without reference to the heart. As in other theocratic communities, a man might be eminently religious, in the Pharisaic sense, and yet utterly depraved and immoral. The teaching of the prophets,[e] which demanded internal godliness, was slighted, and the study of their writings almost entirely put aside for that of the legal traditions and of the Law.[f] The desire to define, to the smallest detail, what the Law required, had led, in the course of ages, to a mass of conflicting Rabbinical opinions, which darkened rather than explained each command. The "hedge" round the Law had proved a hedge of thorns, for Rabbis and people alike.[17] The question was, not what was right or wrong, but what the Law, as expounded by the Rabbis, demanded, and zeal was stimulated by the mercenary expectation of an equivalent reward,[18] for scrupulous exactness in fulfilment.

[16] See instances in Cohen, 183.

[17] Pressel, Rabbinismus Herzog, xii. 473.

[18] Schürer, 483

A better illustration of the moral worthlessness of the Pharisaic ideas of righteousness could hardly, perhaps, be found, than in the fact that, with all their ostentatious reverence for the Scriptures, he who touched a copy of them was, thereby, made unclean. "According to you," said the Sadducees of their rivals, "the Scriptures defile the hands, while Homer does not." The skins on which the sacred books were written might have been those of an unclean beast, or, at least, they were part of a dead body. But the Pharisees had their retort ready. "Why," asked they, "are the bones of an ass clean and those of the high priest, John Hyrcanus, unclean?" "It is the kind of bone that determines the uncleanness," answered the Sadducees, "else we would make spoons of the bones of our relatives!" "Just so," retorted the Pharisees, "it is the value we attach to the Scriptures which has made us decide that they defile the hands, while Homer does not."[19] They worshipped the letter, but misconceived the essence of Scripture: treated morality as a trifle, and trifles as the only religion. In their early days, fired by a true zeal for God; they had degenerated,

[19] Derenbourg, 133. See also 147, 148; 134, 135.

CHAP. XXXVI. as a body, into mere "actors." "There were plenty of Pharisees," says even Jost, himself a Jew, "who used the appearance of piety as a cloak for shameful ends." Nor did this escape the people, especially as these hypocrites sought to attract attention by exaggerated displays, and contemptuous bynames were presently given them. The name of Pharisee came to be like that of Jesuit in the mouth of friends or opponents. Even Philo does not mention it, and it soon died out of the mouth of the people, and survived only as a term of the schools.[20]

[20] Jost, i. 205.

With a system so utterly hollow, and yet so deeply rooted in popular favour, Jesus could hold no terms. With the better side of Pharisaism He had much in common, but, as it showed itself, in its growing corruption, He could only condemn it. Zealots for words and forms; lofty in abstract views; the mouthpiece of the nation at large, in its religious and political aspirations, there must have been little real soundness in a body at large, of which a spirit so gentle as that of Christ could speak as whited sepulchres and a generation of vipers.

To illustrate His meaning, Jesus proceeds to give examples of Pharisaic abuse of the Law, holding up what is implied in its due observance, that He may show how it was broken by its professed zealous defenders. The sublime morality of the New Kingdom, with its lofty spiritualization of the Law, is, He implies, the true conservatism—it is His opponents who are undermining it.

The Mosaic prohibition of murder had been limited by the Rabbis to literal homicide, and they had added to the brief words of the Law, that the criminal was in danger of the judgment of God, in some cases, and of the Sanhedrim in others. But this did not satisfy the high spirituality of the New Kingdom. It included in the brief utterance of God, through Moses, a condemnation even of angry words or thoughts. "I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother will be liable to the judgment of God; and whosoever shall express contempt for his brother, will be liable to the Sanhedrim;[g] and whosoever shall say, Thou worthless one, will be liable to hell fire. I go beyond the

Scribes, for I declare, as the fulfiller of the Law, that unrighteous anger is worthy of the full punishment they attach to its overt result in homicide; nay, more, I declare the expression of such anger in bitter words as incurring the danger of hell. Not to love one's 'brother'[21] is, with me, the essence of the crime condemned by the Law: the lesser expressions of anger I denounce as worthy of divine, though temporal punishment; in the worst cases, as worthy of punishment in the world to come." Anger with a brother entails the anger and judgment of God: public reproach merits a public penalty, but he who would consign another to hell is himself in danger of being sent to it.[h] He does not suppose His disciples could possibly commit the crime of murder, or even break into open violence, but He ranks under an equal guilt the passions which lead to them in others. He charges the murder, not against the hand that strikes, but the heart that hates.[i]

[21] 1 John 3. 15. Matt. 5. 20—26.

This was startling enough, but the application made of it must have sounded no less so. "Only the pure in heart can see God, and hence it is vain for you to seek His presence by an offering, if you have in any way thus offended. If you have, and in the solemn moment of appearing before God remember it,—evil though men think it to break off or interrupt a sacrifice,—leave your offering before the altar; seek him whom you have wronged, and be reconciled to him, and, then, come and offer your gift.[k] You have wronged God, not man only. Beware lest, if you do not make peace with Him, by instant atonement to your brother, He act to you as a creditor does with a debtor he meets in the street—whom he delivers up to the judge, and whom the judge hands over to the officer to cast into prison. I tell you, if God thus let His anger kindle upon you, you will not come out till you have paid the last farthing!"[22]

[22] Hor. Heb. II. 117. Buxtorf, 2,126. Matt. 5. 27—30.

The Pharisaic doctrine of marriage offences and divorce was next unsparingly condemned, as an inadequate expression of the spirit of the Law. It restricted adultery to the crime itself, and it sanctioned divorce at the mere whim of the husband. Doubtless individual Rabbis represented healthier views than others, but they did not affect the prevailing

F 2

tone. As with homicide, so, in adultery, the morality of the New Kingdom traced the crime home to the heart, and condemned the unclean glance as a virtual commission of the crime itself. The thoughts were nothing, in the loose morality of the day, but Jesus arraigns the secret lusts of the breast, with an earnestness unknown to the Rabbis. Unconditional self-mortification is to be carried out, when guilty thoughts imperil the soul. "If your right eye," says He, "or your right hand, your sight or your touch, lead you into temptation, it is better for you to pluck out the one, and cut off the other, rather than be led astray, and not only lose a share in my kingdom, but be cast into hell hereafter."[l] Not that He meant this in a hard and literal sense. The sin is with Him, in the heart, but the senses are its instruments, and no guard can be too strict, no self-restraint too great, if they endanger spiritual purity.

The Pharisaic laws of divorce were shamefully loose. "If any one," said the Rabbis, "see a woman handsomer than his wife, he may dismiss his wife and marry that woman," and they had the audacity to justify this by a text of Scripture.[m] Even the strict Schammai held that if a wife went out without being shrouded in the veil which Eastern women still wear, she might be divorced, and hence many Rabbis locked up their wives when they went out! While some held that divorce should be lawful only for adultery, others, like Josephus, claimed the right to send away their wives if they were not pleased with their behaviour.[23] The school of Hillel even maintained that, if a wife cooked her husband's food badly, by over-salting or over-roasting it, he might put her away, and he might also do so if she were stricken by any grievous bodily affliction![24] The facility of divorce among the Jews, had, indeed, become so great a scandal, even among their heathen neighbours, that the Rabbis were fain to boast of it as a privilege granted to Israel, but not to other nations!

The woman divorced was at once free to marry, her letter of dismissal, signed by witnesses, expressly granting her the liberty to do so.

Rising high above all this festering hypocrisy, the law of

[23] Vita, 76.

[24] Hor. Heb. ii. 120--123. Keim, ii. 253.

the New Kingdom sounded out, clear and decisive. "It has been said by Moses,"[25] continued Jesus, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorce. But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, causes her to be the occasion of adultery[26] if she marry again, for she is still a wife; and whosoever marries her, when put away, thus commits adultery."

The use of oaths was no less prevalent in Christ's day than it still is in the East, and the Rabbis had sanctioned the practice by laying down minute rules for its regulation. The law of Moses had absolutely forbidden perjury,[27] but the casuistry of the Rabbis had so darkened the whole subject of oaths, that they had, in effect, become utterly worthless. They were formally classed under different heads, in Rabbinical jurisprudence, and endless refinements opened facilities for any one to break them who wished. Their number was endless; men swore by heaven, by the earth, by the sun, by the prophets, by the Temple, by Jerusalem, by the altar, by the wood used for it, by the sacrifices, by the Temple vessels, by their own heads.[28]

By joining a second text, from a different part, to the prohibition of perjury, the Scribes had, in effect, opened the door to every abuse. To the prohibition of Moses, "Thou shalt not swear falsely,"[29] they had added the charge, "but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths,"[30] and from this it was argued that no oath was binding, either on one's-self or towards others, which had no vow of sacrifice as a part of it, or if the vow had been punctually fulfilled.[31] Any oath, any deception towards God or man, and even perjury itself, was thus sanctioned, if it were only consecrated and purified by an offering. The garrulous, exaggerating, crafty Jew needed to be checked, rather than helped in his untruthfulness, but the guardians of the purity of the Law had invented endless oaths, with minute discriminations, and verbal shades and catches, which did not expressly name God, or the Temple, or the altar, and these the people might use, without scruple; mock oaths, harmless to themselves and of no binding force!

25 Deut. 24. 1. Matt. 5. 31, 32.

26 Tischendorf's corrected text.

27 Lev. 19. 12.

28 Examples in Hor. Heb. ii. 127, 128. Keim, ii. 255. Wetstein, 305, 420.

29 Lev. 19. 12.

30 Deut. 23. 21

31 Schött, 26. Matt 23. 16 f.

CHAP. XXXVI. Against such equivocation and consecrated hypocrisy Jesus lifted His voice. "I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; neither by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. You would tremble to swear by God, but when you swear by anything connected with His works or His worship, you swear, in reality, by Himself. Nor shall you swear by your head, for you cannot make a hair of it white or black; and, thus, your oaths by it are idle words. But let your speech be simply yes and no, for what exceeds these is from the 'evil one.' As my disciples, your word is enough: you will speak only as ever in the presence of God."[n]

The theory of life under the New Kingdom, as we have seen, was the very opposite of that held by the schools of the day. Prosperity, with them, was an unbroken enjoyment of life to extreme old age, abundance of worldly comforts, and continuous success in all undertakings, and triumphant victory over all enemies. All this was expected as the just reward of a strict obedience to Rabbinical prescriptions, which constituted the "righteousness of the Law." Jesus held forth the very opposite of all this as the blessedness to be sought in the New Kingdom. Poverty, sorrow, and persecution, were to be the natural lot of His followers, but their transcendent reward, hereafter, and the love which inspired such devotion, transfigured them to gain and honour, and demanded the highest joy.

To make the contrast more vivid between the Old Kingdom and the New, he had added "woes" in connection with all that the former had praised as specially blessed. The rich, who have their reward in their earthly possessions; the prosperous, who cared for nothing except this world, would suffer hunger hereafter; those who cared only for present joy, would one day mourn and weep; those whom men praised, would find the praise only deceiving flattery. Patience, humility, gentleness, resignation, and love, were to characterize the New Israel; the virtues and rewards of the soul; the piety of form and rewards in this world, were discountenanced. The New Kingdom was to win hearts by spiritual attractions, till now little valued.

As a practical application of the ideal, thus sketched, He required His followers to repudiate the Old Testament doctrine of retaliation, with the endless refinements of the Rabbis, and to adopt, in its place, the principle of overcoming evil with good. Antiquity, both Jewish and heathen, cherished the idea of revenge for injuries. To requite like with like was assumed as both just and righteous. Even Socrates had no higher idea of virtue than to surpass friends in showing kindness, and enemies in inflicting hurt.[32] Plato,[33] indeed, held that revenge was wrong, and that no one should do evil on any ground; that it was worse to do wrong than to suffer it, and that the virtuous man would not injure any one, because to do so injured himself. But Plato had only in his mind, in these noble sentiments, the relations of Greek citizens to each other, to the exclusion of slaves, and of all the world but his own race; and the motive for his magnanimity was not love for the individual man, or for ideal humanity, but only political justice and right. Roman stoicism rose higher, but its injunctions of kindness to enemies were rather the expression of self-approving virtue than of loving moral conviction. Among the Jews, retaliation had the sanction of Moses. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe, are required by him.[34] [o] The stern Sadducee party clung to the letter of the Law, but the milder Pharisees had invented a scale of money payments instead. As in our own middle ages, a tariff of fines was constructed for each personal injury; for tearing the hair, for a cuff on the ear, a blow on the back, spitting on the person, taking away an under garment, uncovering a woman's head, and the like.[35] The value of a hand, or foot, or an eye, was computed by the depreciation it would have made in the value of a slave. A blow on the ear was variously set at the fine of a shilling or a pound: a blow on the one cheek at two hundred zuzees; on both cheeks, at double. To tear out hair, to spit on the person, to take away one's coat, or to uncover a woman's head, was compensated by a payment of four hundred zuzees.[p]

This rude and often mercenary softening of the harshness

[32] Xen. Mem. ii 6. 35.

[33] Critias, 469. Gorgias, 469. De Repub. i. 334.

[34] Exod. 21. 24.

[35] Robertson's Works, iii. 239 (State of Europe in Middle Ages) Bastian, Rechtsverhältnisse, &c., 210. Hor. Heb. ii. 130. Sepp, iv 224.

of the old Law fell wholly below the requirements of the New Kingdom. Its members must suffer wrong patiently, that the conscience of the wrong-doer,—become its own accuser,—might be won to repentance, by the lesson of unresisting meekness. Christ's own divine charity and forgiveness was to be repeated by His followers. Sin was to be conquered by being made to feel the power of goodness. The present was, at best, only a discipline for the future, and the patient endurance of wrong, from Christ-like love and gentleness, was part of the preparation for the pure joys of the Messianic kingdom. "Ye have heard," said He, "that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not the evil man; but whosoever smites thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.[q] And to him who desires to contend with thee and take thy coat, leave him thy cloak also. And whosoever shall press thee one mile, go with him two. To him that asks thee, give, and from him that desires to borrow of thee, turn not away."[r] The spirit of such injunctions is evident. Hasty retaliation; readiness to stand on one's rights in all cases; deliberate revenge rather than pity, are unworthy a member of the New Kingdom. It is for him to teach by bearing, yielding, and giving, and not by words only. The virtues he commends he is to illustrate. But it is far from the teaching of Christ that law is to cease, or that the evil-doer is to have everything at his mercy. Only, as far as possible, the principle of His kingdom is to be the purest deepest, self-sacrificing love.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (CONCLUDED).



JESUS had led His audience step by step to higher and higher conceptions, and now, by an easy transition, raised them to the highest of all.[1]

The character of any religion depends on its idea of God. The Jews had no loftier thought of Him than as a national deity, the Father of Israel and of its proselytes, but not the God of the world at large. They looked on Him also as a jealous God, and the Pharisee urged himself to a painful zeal in his fulfilment of the Law by the thought that the sins of the father were visited on the third and fourth generation. If he agonized to carry out a thousand minute prescriptions, if the Essene secluded himself in hurtful loneliness, if the Sadducee toiled to discharge all that was required in the service of the Temple, and in the presentation of offerings, if the people mourned in the apprehension that God had forsaken them, it was because all alike looked up to a Being who, as they believed, required what they could hardly render. They should have drawn other conceptions from their ancient Scriptures, but they did not. They had always learned much that was true and sublime from the Law and the Prophets —the Majesty of God and the dependence of the creature— the dignity of man as the divine image, and the kingly relation of Jehovah to Israel—His son, His first-born, His bride, His spouse. They had never lost the conviction that their nation could not perish, because the honour of God was pledged to defend it, and they even looked forward, with a frenzied earnestness, to a future when He would send His Messiah, and raise them above all the nations. As Jews, many doubtless drew comfort from the divine words, that, like as

[1] Chrysostom: quoted in Meyer, Matthäus, 157

CH. XXXVII.

a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. But their theology had sunk to a mere mercenary relation of performance and reward. The idea of a strict return of good for good, or evil for evil, extended to the next world as well as this, and at the best, God was the Father of Israel only, not of mankind. Still, above all, the Master, looking for service from man as the servant—the fond thought of His fatherhood, even in its limited national sense, grew more and more common as Christ's day grew near. The Jew was being educated for the divine announcement of the whole truth.

The heathen world, also, had long been unconsciously preparing for its proclamation. Greek philosophy had spoken of the Father of gods and men. Man was the divine image and of divine origin—the friend, the fellow-citizen, the emanation, the Son, of God.[2] In an insincere age, when fine words were used as mere rhetorical flourishes, springing from no conviction or earnestness, Seneca,[3] a generation later, was able to speak almost like a Christian. "The gods," said he, "are full of pity and friendliness—do everything for our good, and for our benefit have created all kinds of blessings, with exhaustless bounty, and prepared everything for us beforehand. What they have they make over to us: that is how they use things; and they are unwearied, day and night, dispensing their benefits as the protectors of the human race. We are loved by them as children of their bosom, and, like loving parents, they smile at the faults of their children, and cease not to bestow kindness on kindness upon us; give us before we ask, and continue to do so, although we do not thank them, and even though we cry out defiantly, 'I shall take nothing from them; let them keep what they have for themselves!' The sun rises over the unjust, and the seas spread out even for sea robbers. The gods are easily appeased, never unforgiving; how unfortunate were we if they were not so!"[4] Thus also "The way of man, in which the god-like walks, goes upwards to the gods, who reach out the hand to us without pride or jealousy, to help us to rise. We need no temple, nor even to lift up our hands to heaven: God is

[2] Authorities in Keim, ii. 58.

[3] Renan, L'Antechrist, 125.

[4] Seneca d. Ir. 2. 27; d. Benef. 6. 23; 2. 29; 4. 5. Epis. 73, 95.

near thee; the Holy Spirit, the Watcher over good or evil, who ever, unweariedly, leads us to God."[5] Words like these sound Christian, though we know that they were only artificial rhetoric, composed to turn aside the charge of worshipping stocks and stones. Faith in the divinity often gives way, in Seneca, before haughty pride in humanity, and that pride, in turn, sinks before the dark future. The fancy played over the dark abyss with empty words of comfort, respecting the father-like gods and god-like man, but even prosperity could hardly amuse itself with them, and the hour of trial repeated them with hollow laughter and self-murder.[6] Yet they were there to use for the highest good, had men chosen. The religious education of the world had gradually, through long ages, become ready for the teachings of Jesus.[a]

The Sermon on the Mount was spoken while every sign of the wrath of God with the nation lay like a burden on all, and perplexed the masters in Israel. Yet it was then that Jesus revealed that God was the Father of men, and had loved them from the beginning of the world, appealing for proof even to the lilies of the field and the birds of the air.[7] For the first time, men heard that the whole race were the sons of the great heavenly Father; that the world lay in the sunshine of His eternal love, and that all alike were invited to seek His face.[b] It was the first proclamation of a universal religion, and, as such, an event unique in the history of mankind. In the early ages of the world, war was perpetual. Even after men had long adopted city life and its civilization, a stranger and an enemy were synonymous. Thus, in the first ages of Rome, a stranger who had not put himself formally under the protection of some Roman, had no rights and no protection. What the Roman citizen took from him was as lawful gain as the shell which no one owned, picked up on the sea-shore.[8] He was like a wild beast, to be hunted and preyed on at any one's will.[9] To use Mommsen's figure, a tribe or people must be either the anvil or the hammer. Ulysses was only the type of the whole at large in his day, when, in the early part of his wanderings, he landed in Thrace, and having found a city,

[5] Senec. Epis. 73.

[6] Keim, ii. 59.

[7] Matt. 6. 28.

[8] Mommsen's Röm. Gesch i. 158.

[9] Mommsen's Röm. Gesch. i. 161.

instantly sacked it and killed all the inhabitants. Where there was no express treaty, plunder and murder were always to be dreaded. The only safety of individuals or communities was their own capacity of self-defence. As tribes and clans expanded to nations, the blood connection secured peace, more or less, in the area they occupied, and, ultimately, the interests of commerce, or the impulse of self-preservation, joined even states of different nationalities in peaceful alliances. Isolated nations, like the Jews, still kept up the intense aversion to all but their own race, but the progress of the world made them more and more exceptional.

Before the age of Christ, the conquests of Rome had broken down the dividing walls of nationality over the civilized earth, and had united all races under a common government, which secured a widespread peace, hitherto unknown. Men of races living far apart found themselves free to compete for the highest honours of public life or of letters, and Rome accepted emperors and men of genius, alike, from the obscure populations of the provinces.[c]

But though conquest had forced the nations into an outward unity, there was no real fusion or brotherhood. Man, as man, had gained nothing. The barbarian and the slave were no less despised than before, and had gained no more rights. The Romans had been forced, for their own sakes, to raise the conquered to more or less political equality with themselves, but they did so from no sentiment of respect to them as fellow-men, and still bore themselves towards them with the same haughty superiority and ill-concealed aversion. It was the peace of political and even moral death. All mankind had become the slaves of the despot on the Tiber. Ancient virtues had passed away, and vice and corruption, unequalled, perhaps, in any age, lay like a deadly miasma over universal society. The union of the world was regretted, as superseding the times when Rome could indulge its tastes in war and plunder. It was a political comprehension, not a moral federation. The hostility of the past was impossible, but the world had only become a mob, not a brotherhood, of nations,[10] and had sunk in morality, as it had advanced in outward alliance.

[10] See a fine chapter in Ecce Homo, 127—141.

With the Jews, the old hatred of all races but their own had grown with the calamities of the nation. It seemed to them a duty to hate the heathen and the Samaritan, but their cynicism extended, besides, to all respecting whom the jealousy for the honour of the Law had raised suspicion. They hated the publicans; the Rabbi hated the priest, the Pharisee the Sadducee, and both loathed and hated the common people, who did not know the ten thousand injunctions of the schools. They had forgotten what the Old Testament taught of the love of God towards men, and of the love due by man to his fellow. They remembered that they had been commanded to show no favour to the sunken nations of Canaan, but they forgot that they had not been told to hate them. The Law had said "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" [11] but their neighbour, they assumed, meant only a Jew or a proselyte, and they had added that they should "hate their enemies." "If a Jew see a Gentile fall into the sea," wrote Maimonides, still cherishing the old feeling centuries later, "let him by no means take him out; for it is written, 'Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbour,' but this is not thy neighbour." [12] The spirit of revenge which prevailed, embittered even private life among the Jews themselves. Each had his own enemies, whom he felt free to hate and to injure, and all, alike, hated whole classes of their own nation, and the whole heathen races.

[11] Lev. 19 18.

[12] *Art.* "Nächster," Herzog x. 185. Hor. Heb. ii. 134.

Jesus was, now, by a simple utterance, to create a new religious era. "Ye have heard," said He, "that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them who persecute you; that ye may become sons of your Father, who is in heaven; for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and good, and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? (in my kingdom). Do not even the (hated) publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye that exceeds? Do not even the (heathen) Gentiles the same thing? Be ye, therefore, perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

It was a new era for man. Heathenism had fine sentiments, but they were supported by no high morality, and no living hopes. The Old Testament often commended kindness and mercy,[13] but it also sanctioned revenge and triumph over the fall of an enemy,[14] and, even in the most attractive passages, it seemed as if piety were expected to make the anger of God on one's adversaries the more certain.[15] But Jesus throws down the dividing prejudices of nationality, and teaches universal love without distinction of race, merit, or rank. A man's neighbour, henceforth, was every one who needed help, even an enemy. All men, from the slave to the highest, were sons of one Father in heaven, and should feel and act towards each other, as brethren. No human standard of virtue would suffice: no imitation of the loftiest examples among men. Moral perfection had been recognized, alike by heathen and Jews, as found only in likeness to the divine, and *that* Jesus proclaims as, henceforth, the one ideal for all humanity. With a sublime enthusiasm and brotherly love for the race, He rises above His age, and announces a common Father of all mankind, and one grand spiritual ideal in resemblance to Him.

[13] Exod. 23. 4, 5. Ps. 7. 5. Prov. 24. 17. Job 31. 29, 30. Prov. 25. 21.

[14] Ps. 7. 6; 54. 7.

[15] Ps. 7. 6, 7.

With this grand truth of Christianity the relation of man to his Maker was entirely changed. The love of a child to a father took the place of fear, as a motive to His service. A new spiritual kingdom of filial love and obedience was called into being, with filial yearnings after Him, and childlike devotion to His will—a kingdom in which the humble, the meek, and the merciful found their heaven, and in which all who hungered and thirsted after righteousness felt that they could be satisfied. The pure in heart were, as such, its citizens; the souls who love the things of peace were called its children, and those who bore persecution and sorrow for the sake of righteousness were to inherit it.[d]

To be "perfect as the great Father in heaven is perfect," is to do God's will on earth as the angels do it above, and, hence, the new kingdom is thus spoken of elsewhere. It was to be wholly spiritual, in contrast to the political dreams of the Pharisees. They had transformed the predictions of the prophets to a political programme, which should be

realized by war against Rome, and zealous agitation against the Sadducean aristocracy. They thought of another Maccabæan war, to be followed by a revelation of the Messiah from heaven. The kingdom of Jesus, on the contrary, was not to rise like a State, so that men could say it was here, or there, because it was already in their midst.[16] It could not be otherwise. He had proclaimed that God was the great Father, and, as such, the loving, filial desire that they might be His children thrust aside the cold thought of reward, which had hitherto ruled. He proclaimed that God loved them, not in return for their services, but from the love and tenderness of a Father's heart, which sent forth His sun over good and bad alike, and rejoiced more over a sinner's repentance than over the weary exactness in Rabbinical rules of fifty who thought themselves righteous. The fundamental principle of the Judaism of the day was undermined by the new doctrine. What need was there longer for offerings, for Temple ritual, for washings or fastings, or scrupulous tithings, when the great Father sought only the heart of His penitent child? The hope of the Rabbis that they could hold God to the fulfilment of what they thought His promises, if only the Mosaic ideal of the theocracy, in their sense, was restored, fell to the ground. The isolation of the Jews, and their glory as the chosen people of God, were things of the past. One part of the theocracy after the other was doomed to fall before this grand proclamation, for its foundations were sapped. The Fatherhood of God, which now falls like an empty sound on the ear of the multitude, was, at its utterance, the creation of a new world.[17e]

Jesus had, now, set forth the characteristics of citizenship in His new kingdom, and the new law; He passed, next, to the new life.[18] A warning was needed to guard His followers, in their religious duties, from the abuses of the Rabbinical party.

Almsgiving had been exalted by the Scribes to an act in itself meritorious before God. The words "alms," and "righteousness,"[f] were, indeed, used interchangeably.[19] "For one farthing given to the poor," said the Rabbis, "a man

[16] Luke 17. 20, 21.

[17] Hausrath, i. 356.

[18] Westcott, Introduction, 358.

[19] Hor. Heb. ii. 136.

CH. XXXVII.

will receive heaven." The words, "I shall behold Thy face in righteousness," were rendered in the gloss "because of alms." "This money," said others, "goes for alms, that my sons may live, and that I may obtain the world to come." "A man's table now expiates by alms, as the altar, heretofore, did by sacrifice." "He who gives alms will be kept from all evil." In an age when the religious spirit was dead, outward acts of religion were ostentatiously practised, at once to earn a reward from God, and to secure honour for holiness from men. Religion was acted for gain, either present or future. Against such hypocrisy Jesus warns His followers. "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness[g] before men,[20] to be seen by them, otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven." They were to draw no attention to their charity, by having it proclaimed in the synagogue,[h] or by ostentatiously giving it in the streets, to earn praise of men, but were to hide it as if they would not even let their left hand know what their right hand was doing. Sincerity only, gave charity value. The amount was not essential: the spirit was all. Insincerity had no reward but the empty honour from men, got by deceit; sincerity was rewarded by their Father in heaven, who saw the secret deed.[i]

[20] Matt. 6. 1—15.

Even prayer had become a formal mechanical act, prescribed by exact rules. The hours, the matter, the manner, were all laid down. A rigid Pharisee prayed many times a day, and too many took care to have the hours of prayer overtake them, decked in their broad phylacteries, at the street corners, that they might publicly show their devoutness,—or went to the synagogue that the congregation might see it. Nor were they content with short prayers, but lengthened their devotions as if to make a merit of their duration.[21] Instead of this, the members of the new kingdom were to retire to strict secrecy when they prayed, and address their Father who sees in secret, and would reward them hereafter, in the future world, for their sincerity. Nor were they to use the foolish repetitions in vogue with the heathen, who thought they would be heard for their much speaking. The great Father knows what we need before

[21] See Schürer, 505. Hor. Heb. ii. 144—147. Matt. 6. 6, ff.

we ask Him, and requires no lengthened petitions.[k] Prayer in the congregation is not forbidden, for Jesus Himself frequented the synagogue, and joined in public devotions. But private prayer must be private, to guard against human weakness corrupting it into worthless parade. The simplest, shortest prayer, unheard by human ear, is accepted of God, if it rise from the heart: if the heart be wanting, all prayer is mere form.

It is always much easier, however, to follow a pattern than a precept, and, hence, Jesus proceeded to set before them a model prayer. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts (to Thee), as we, also, have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."[22] He added that our being forgiven our trespasses by God depended on our forgiving men theirs against us.

[22] The Doxology does not appear before the middle of the fourth century. It is a late addition. Herzog, i. 493.

It was the custom of every Rabbi to teach his disciples a form of prayer,[23] and in "The Lord's Prayer," Jesus, as John already had done, followed the example. But what a difference between His model and that of other teachers! He had created a new heaven, and a new earth, for the soul, and in this prayer the mighty revelation of the Fatherhood of God shines, like a sun, over all humanity. The highest conceivable ideal of perfection and felicity for the race, is offered in the will of the Eternal Father being done on earth as it is in heaven. Childlike trust and dependence ask, and are contented with, daily bounty from that Father's hand. His mercy is pleaded by hearts that already have learned to show it to others. The spirit stands before Him clothed in humility, and full of love and tenderness towards its fellows. Conscious weakness stretches out its hand for heavenly help, distrusting itself, but strong in a Higher. Each clause, almost each word, is full of the deepest significance. Each is filled with divine light.[l] After eighteen centuries, Christendom knows no expression of thoughts and feelings so full in so small a compass, so rich, so majestic in

[23] Sepp, ii. 326.

CH. XXXVII. praise and petition. Hallowed phrases, current in His day, may be quoted as parallels of single parts, but He alone united them to words of His own with a breadth and solidity, a childlike simplicity and wisdom, a strength and lowliness wholly unknown in Jewish literature.[m]

Fasting had become one of the prominent religious usages of our Saviour's day. Though only one fast had been appointed by Moses—that of the Day of Atonement—the Pharisees had added numerous others, especially on the two days of the week, Monday and Thursday, on which synagogue worship was held. When fasting, they strewed their heads with ashes, and neither washed nor anointed themselves[24] nor trimmed their beards, but put on wretched clothing, and showed themselves in all the outward signs of mourning and sadness used for the dead.[n] Insincerity made capital of feigned humiliation and contrition, till even the Roman theatre noticed it. In one of the plays of the time, a camel, covered with a mourning cloth, was led on the stage. "Why is the camel in mourning?" asked one of the players. "Because the Jews are keeping the Sabbath year, and grow nothing, but are living on thistles. The camel is mourning because its food is thus taken from it."[25] Rabbis were forbidden to anoint themselves before going out,[26] and it was recorded of a specially famous doctor, that his face was always black with fasting.[27] All pretence was abhorrent to the soul of Jesus, especially in religion. "When *ye* fast," said He, "be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But do thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face; that thou mayest not appear unto men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father, who sees in secret, will reward thee." To seek effect, applause, credit, or gain, by a show of godliness, must be shunned by members of the New Kingdom. It would be better to let men think evil of them, than to be tempted to use religion for ulterior ends. True pain and true sorrow hide from the eye of strangers; they withdraw to the secrecy of the breast.

[24] Lightfoot, ii. 155.

[25] Sepp, ii. 345.

[26] Gfrörer, i. 165.

[27] Lightfoot, ii. 154. Keim, ii. 272. Schürer, 505, 615.

Matt. 6. 16—18.

He had already spoken of the need of care in the right use of the blessings of life, but He knew our proneness to forget, and returns to the subject once more. "Heap not up for yourselves," said He, "treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But treasure up for yourselves treasures in heaven,[o] where neither moth nor rust consumes, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For, if your treasure is on earth, your heart must needs be careless of heaven. But if it be in heaven, your hearts will be there also. To have it there, you must have the inner light in your souls,—your mind[28] and heart—by which you perceive and cherish the truth—unclouded. If they be darkened, it will turn your heart away from the right and divine. The body without the eye is in darkness; for light enters only by the eye, as from a lamp. When your eye is sound, your body is full of light; when it is darkened, all within is night. So is it with the eye of the soul."

[28] ὁ νοῦς, Chrysost. Matt. 6. 19—23

"Do not fancy," He continued, "that you can join the striving for riches and for the kingdom of God. They are absolutely opposed. No man can serve two masters whose interests are opposite. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot worship the God of heaven, and Mammon, the god of riches.[p] To serve God, and yet make money your idol, is impossible! They are opposites!"

"An undivided heart, which worships God alone, and trusts Him as it should, is raised above anxiety for earthly wants. Therefore, I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.[29] Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the air; they sow not, neither reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.[q] Are ye not much better than they? Which of you, by anxious thought, can add one cubit to the length of his life? And about raiment why are ye anxious? Consider the lilies of the field, how fair and beautiful they grow.[30] They toil not, neither do they spin, and yet Solomon, in his royal robes, was not arrayed like

[29] Schleiermacher, Predigten, iii. 389. Matt. 6. 24—34

[30] Sepp. iii. 207.

CH. XXXVII.

one of these. And if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into an oven,[r] will He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not, therefore, anxious, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we put on?[s] For the Gentiles seek after all these things. But your Heavenly Father knows that ye have need of them. Seek, first, His kingdom and righteousness, and they shall all be added to you. Be not, therefore, anxious for the morrow.[31] The morrow will have its own cares. Each day's evil is sufficient for the day." He enjoins not idle indifference and easiness of temper, but the freedom from care of a soul which firmly trusts in the Providence of God. The citizens of the New Kingdom might well confide in their Heavenly Father, and amidst all the trials and straits even of such a martyr life as had been predicted for them, might and should retain calm and unshaken confidence in the sustaining and guiding wisdom and love of God. As His children, they had an express right to look for His all-sufficient care.

[31] Schleiermacher, Predigten, i. 124. Dukes, 68. Jud. Handwerkerleben, 22.

No vice was more rank among the Jews, through the influence of their priestly and Rabbinical leaders, than narrow bigotry, which condemned all opinions varying in the least from their own. They were trained to take it for granted that their whole religious system, in its minutest forms and rules—their religious thought, faith, and life—had been revealed by God from heaven. They were a nation of fanatics, ready to fight to the death for any one of the ten thousand ritual injunctions of their religious teachers. A discourse designed to proclaim the advent, character, and laws of the new theocracy, could not close without touching on the duties of social life, and laying down principles for guidance. He had enjoined the broad law of gentle love, as the rule for intercourse with men at large. He now illustrates it in additional applications.

"Judge not," said He, "that ye be not judged[32] (by God); condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. For with what judgment ye judge (men) ye shall be judged (hereafter). Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together,

[32] Matt. 7. 1—12. Luke 6.37—42. See Sermon by Schleiermacher, iii. 34. Jacox's Secular Annotations, First series, 208. Schenkel, 101. Keim, ii 30.

running over, will they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. Be charitable respecting the errors and shortcomings of others, that you may not have your own sins brought against you at the great day, and find there the condemnation you have yourself shown here. It is a fearful thing for you, who are to teach men, to fall away from the truth, for how, then, will you instruct sinful men aright? If the blind attempt to lead the blind both fall into a ditch, and if you yourselves be wrong you cannot lead others, who know nothing of it, to the salvation of the New Kingdom. You will both go more and more hopelessly wrong, till, at last, you sink into Gehenna. Those you teach cannot be wiser than you, their teachers, for a disciple is not above his master, but comes, at best, in the end, to be like him. If, then, you would not be blind leaders of the blind, take care, before you essay to judge and better the religious state of others, to examine your own spiritual condition, and reform whatever is wrong in it.[33] Why should you mark the atom of straw or dust that is in your brother's eye—his petty fault—if you do not, in your self-righteousness, see the beam that is in your own eye?[34t] Self-blinded hypocrite! first cast the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to cast the mote out of your brother's eye."

"You will meet with men," He continued, "who, when the divine truth is offered them, will only profane it—men utterly ungodly and hardened, who wilfully reject the counsel of God, with blasphemy, mocking, and slandering. Do not put it in their power to dishonour it. To do so is like casting a holy thing to the street dogs, or throwing pearls before wild swine, who would only trample them as worthless under their feet, and turn against yourselves and rend you."[35u]

"You will need help from God in your great task; for your own spiritual welfare, and for success in your work. Ask, therefore, and it will be given you; seek, and ye will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. If your son ask bread, do

[33] Luke 6.39—41

[34] See a curious Lay Sermon by Jacox, 1st series, 187. Keim, ii. 31. Dukes, 165.

[35] See Sermons by Schleiermacher, iii. 46, 59, 84.

CH. XXXVII. you mock him by giving him a stone? or, if he ask a fish, do you mock him by giving him a serpent? or, if he ask an egg, will you give him a scorpion?[36] [x] You need, then, have no fear of refusal of spiritual help from your Heavenly Father, for if you who are sinful, though members of the New Kingdom, would not think of refusing to supply the wants of your children, far less will your Father above refuse you, His spiritual children, what you need."

[36] Luke 11. 12.

Jesus had now come to the close of His exposition of the nature and duties of His kingdom, and ended His statement of them by a brief recapitulation and summary of all He had said of the latter, in their relation to men at large. "All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." The Law had said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,"[37] but it had meant by neighbour a Jew or a proselyte, and had commanded the extirpation of the Canaanites, and sanctioned merciless war with the heathen around. These grand words were, therefore, a rule for the nation towards its own members, but no great law for mankind. But Jesus ignores this narrowness, and proclaims all men brethren, as common children of one Father in Heaven. This golden rule had been proclaimed more or less fully before. It is found in Socrates[38] and Menander,[39] and even in the Chinese classics.[40] Philo quotes, as an old Jewish saying, "Do not to others what you would be unwilling to suffer;" and the book of Tobit[41] enjoins, "Do that to no man which thou hatest."[y] In the generation before Jesus it had been repeated by Hillel to a heathen, who mockingly asked him if he could teach him the whole Law while he stood on one foot. "What you would not like done to yourself, do not to thy neighbour," replied the Rabbi—"this is the whole Law: all the rest is a commentary on it—go learn this."[42] But, as Hillel gave it, this noble answer was only misleading. It was striking to find a Rabbi with such enlightened insight into the essence of the Law as to see that all its ordinances and rites had a moral end, but the Law was much more than a mere code of morals between man and man. Its fitting summary is much rather

[37] Lev. 19. 18.
[38] B.C. 436—338.
[39] B.C. 342—291.
[40] Ewald, iv. 270.
[41] Ch. 4. 15.
[42] Hillel u. Jesus, 29.

that central requirement repeated each day, even till now, by every Jew in his prayers—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."[43] Morality, apart from its religious basis and supreme enforcement, degrades the Law to a level with the common morality of the world at large.[44] It was reserved for Jesus to announce our duty to man in its subordination to our higher relation to God; to make it only part of that filial love which reflects the tenderness on all our brethren which it feels supremely towards their Father and ours, in Heaven. With Him, love of universal humanity has its deep religious ground in the love of God whom we are to resemble,—towards all the race, as His children. The love of man, He tells us, is the second great commandment; not the first;[45] it is the moon shining by light borrowed from that Sun. The highest of the Rabbis cannot stand in the presence of the Son of Mary![46]

He had reached His peroration. It remained only to add solemn warnings, and these He now gave. "Enter in," said He, "through the narrow gate,[47] for narrow is the gate and straitened is the way of self-denial and struggle that leads to life, and few there are that find it. But wide is the gate and broad is the way of sin that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. Beware of false teachers,[48] who would turn you aside from the safe road. They will come to you affecting to be my followers, but they will be only wolves in sheep's clothing. You will know them fully by their fruits—that is, by their lives. Do men gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles?[49] So, every good tree brings forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. The good, out of the good treasure of the heart, bring forth that which is good; and the evil man, out of the evil, brings forth that which is evil; for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.[50] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Have nothing to do with them, and do not follow them, for every tree that brings not forth good fruit is cut down, and cast into the fire. So, then, by their fruits ye will know them fully."

[43] Deut. 6. 5.
[44] Hillel u. Jesus, 19.
[45] Mark 12. 28—34.
[46] Elsey, i. 138. Keim, ii 181. Baur, 31.
[47] Land and Book, 28. Matt. 6. 13—23 Luke 6. 41—46
[48] L'Antechrist, 417.
[49] Tristram, 426 427. Herzog, xi. 25
[50] Luke 6. 45.

CH. XXXVII.

"Nor is the danger of being led astray by false teachers light, for not all who acknowledge me as their Master will enter into the glory of the heavenly Kingdom, but those only who do the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not teach in Thy name confessing Thee as Jesus Messias, and by the power of Thy name cast out devils, and, by the same power, did we not do many mighty works, owning Thee, and working through Thee, in all things?'[z] And then shall I say unto them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' Take warning, for even some of you call me Lord, Lord,[51] and do not the things which I say."[52]

[51] Winer, 161
[52] Luke 6. 46.

That one in the position of Jesus, an unknown Galilæan; untrained in the schools; in early manhood; with no support from the learned or the powerful, should have used such words, in a discourse so transcendently lofty in its teachings, is to be explained only on the ground that He spoke with a divine consciousness of being the Messiah, who should hereafter be the Judge of mankind. He calmly founds a kingdom in which the only rewards and punishments are those of the conscience here, and those of eternity, after death. He bears Himself, and speaks, as a King; supersedes or perfects the laws of the existing theocracy as He thinks best; invites adherents, but warns off all except the truly godly and sincere, by holding out the most discouraging prospects through life; keeps aloof from the civil or ecclesiastical authorities, and acts independently of both. Finally, as the one law of His invisible kingdom in the souls of men, He requires supreme love and devotion to Himself, and demands that this be shown by humble and continuous efforts after likeness to God, and by the imitation of His own pure and universal love to mankind. To have conceived a spiritual empire so unique in the history of religion, is to have proved His title to His highest claims.

His concluding words are in keeping with these. He had announced that He would judge the world at the great day, and now makes hearty acceptance and performance of His commands the condition of future salvation or ruin. "Every one, therefore (now, or hereafter), who hears these sayings

of mine and obeys them, is like a man, who, in building a house, digged deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock. And the winter rains fell,[53] and the torrents rose, and the storms blew, and beat upon that house, and did not shake it, because it was well built, and had been founded upon the rock. But every one who hears them, and does not obey them, is like a foolish man, who, without a foundation, built his house upon the sandy earth. And the rain descended, and the torrents rushed down, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and straightway it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."[aa]

[53] Keim. ii. 32. Matt. 7. 24—27 Luke 6. 47—49

No wonder that when He had finished such an address, the multitudes were astonished at His teaching. They had been accustomed to the tame and slavish servility of the Rabbis, with their dread of varying a word from precedent and authority; their cobwebbery of endless sophistries and verbal trifling; their laborious dissertations on the infinitely little; their unconscious oversight of all that could affect the heart; their industrious trackings through the jungles of tradition and prescription; and felt that in the preaching of Jesus, they, for the first time, had something that stirred their souls, and came home to their consciences. One of the Rabbis had boasted that every verse of the Bible was capable of six hundred thousand different explanations, and there were seventy different modes of interpretation current,[54] but the vast mass of explanations and interpretations were no better than pedantic folly, concerning itself with mere insignificant minutiæ which had no bearing on religion or morals. Instead of this, Jesus had spoken as a legislator, vested with greater authority than Moses. To transmit, unchanged, the traditions received from the past, was the one idea of all other teachers; but He, while reverent, was not afraid to criticize, to reject, and to supplement. To venture on originality, and independence was something hitherto unknown.

[54] Eisenmenger's Entdecktes Jud. i. 453, 457.

The life of Jesus, in all its aspects, is the great lesson of humanity: His death is its hope. But there lies a wondrous treasure in His words. What but a pure and sinless soul could have conceived such an idea of God as the

CH. XXXVII.

Father of mankind, drawing us to Himself by the attraction of holy and exhaustless love? "It could only rise," says Hausrath, "in a spirit that stood pure, guiltless, and sinless before God—a spirit in which all human unrest and disturbance were unknown, on which there lay no sense of the littleness of life, no distracting feeling of disappointed ambition. Sinful man, with a stained or even uneasy conscience, will always think of God as jealous, wrathful, and about to avenge Himself. The revelation that God is the Father of men could rise only in a mind in which the image of God mirrored itself in calm completeness, because the mirror had no specks to mar it. The revelation of God as the Father is the strongest proof of the absolute perfection of the human nature in Jesus."[55]

[55] Hausrath, i. 355.

"He has left us not only a life, but a rich world of thoughts," says Keim,[56] "in which all the best inspirations and longings of mankind meet and are reflected. It is the expression of the purest and directest truths which rise in the depths of the soul, and they are made common to all mankind by being uttered in the simplest and most popular form."

[56] Der Geschichtliche Christus, 184.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### OPEN CONFLICT.



JESUS had now been some months in Galilee, and the season of the great feasts had returned. It was meet that Judea, which had rejected Him when He first preached in it, should be once more visited, and the news of the Kingdom once more sent abroad among the throngs of pilgrims from every part of the world, attracted at such times to Jerusalem.

Leaving the north, therefore, for a time, He again journeyed south; perhaps by short stages, preaching as He went; perhaps with one of the bands of pilgrims which gathered from each neighbourhood to go up to "the House of the Lord." No voice would join with so rapt a devotion in the joyful solemnities of such a journey,—in the psalms that enlivened the way,—or the formal devotions of morning and evening. But what feast it was He thus honoured is not told, nor are there means for deciding. That of Purim, a month before the Passover, the Passover itself, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, have each found favour on plausible grounds, but where there is such contrariety of opinion, the safest course is to leave the matter unsettled.[a]

Of the visit we know only one incident,[1] but it was the turning point in the life of our Lord.

[1] John 5. 1—47

Jerusalem in those days was a contrast in its water supply, as in much else, to the fallen glory of its present condition. Several natural springs seem to have flowed in the city or near it, in ancient times, but they have long been choked up, with the exception of the single "Fountain of the Virgin," still found in the Kedron valley. There is now, besides, only a single well—that of Joab, at the junction of the Kedron

and Hinnom valleys, near Siloam, south-east from the town. It was doubtless used in Christ's day, and it is still one of the principal sources of summer supply for Jerusalem, though, like everything else, under the withering spell of Turkish rule, it is in such disrepair that its water, drawn from a depth of 125 feet, is tainted with sewage. The ancient supply, however, seems to have been mainly obtained by collecting the rain water in pools and cisterns, and by aqueducts which drained distant hills, and brought abundance into the various public pools and reservoirs of the city and Temple,[b] the space beneath which was honeycombed by immense rock-hewn cisterns. Many houses, also, had cisterns, hewn in the rock, in the shape of an inverted funnel, to collect the rain, but it was from the numerous "pools" that the public supply was mainly derived. Eight still remain, in greater or less extreme decay, and there appear to have been at least three others, in ancient times.

One of the most famous of these, in Christ's day, was known as the Pool of Bethesda, which recent explorations appear to have re-discovered at the north-west corner of the Temple enclosure. If the identification be valid, the pool was a great reservoir, 165 feet in length, hewn in the limestone rock to a breadth of 48 feet, and divided in halves by a pier of masonry 5 feet thick, built across it. Water still enters it from the north-west corner, and is probably an abundant spring, though now so mixed with drainage as to be unfit for drinking. Eusebius speaks of the Bethesda of his day as "twin pools, one of which is filled by the rains of the year, but the other has water tinged in an extraordinary way with red."[2] This effect was likely produced by the rapid influx of water through underground channels, after heavy rains. It is said by St. John to have been close to the "Sheep Gate"—the entrance, doubtless, of the numerous flocks for the Temple market.[c]

[2] Onomasticon, quoted in Recov. of Jerusalem, 196.

Bathing in mineral waters has, in all ages, been regarded as one of the most potent aids to recovery from various diseases, and in the East, where water is everything, this belief has always prevailed.[3] The Pool of Bethesda, from whatever cause, was in especial favour for its curative powers, which

[3] Vaihinger, in Herzog, i. 657.

were supposed to be most effective when the waters were "troubled," either by the discoloration after heavy rains, or by periodical flowing after intermission, as is still the case with the Fountain of the Virgin, near Siloam.[d]

Natural explanations of ordinary phenomena were unknown in these simple times, for there was no such thing as science. Among the Jews, as among other races, everything was attributed to the direct action of supernatural beings. In the Book of Jubilees,[4] which shows the popular ideas of Christ's day, there are angels of adoration, of fire, wind, clouds, hail, hoar frost, valleys, thunder, lightning, winter, spring, summer, and autumn, and of "all things in the heavens and earth, and in all valleys; of darkness, of light, of dawn, and of evening." The healing powers of the Bethesda waters were, hence, ascribed to periodical visits of an angel, who "troubled the water." Popular fancy had, indeed, created a complicated legend to account for the wonder. At least as far back as the days of Nehemiah,[5] the ebbing and flowing of some springs had been ascribed to a great dragon which lived at the source, and drank up the waters when it woke, leaving them to flow only while it was asleep. It was even said that a good angel dwelt beside healing springs, and each morning gave them their virtue afresh, and a Rabbi had gone so far as to report that, as he sat by a fountain, the good angel who dwelt in it appeared to him, and said that a demon was trying to get into it, to hurt those who frequented it. He was, therefore, to go and tell the townsfolks to come with hammers, or iron rods or bars,[6] and beat the water till it grew red with thick drops of blood—the sign that the demon was conquered and slain.[e]

[4] Cap. 2. See also *Art.* "Engel," in Herzog, iv. 22.

[5] Chap. 2. 13.

[6] Vajicra. § 24. Sepp. ii. 37. Hor. Heb. iii 293.

Some such fanciful notions, based, very probably, on real curative powers in the water at certain seasons, attracted daily to Bethesda a multitude of unfortunates who hoped to be healed of blindness, atrophy, lameness, and other infirmities, by bathing at the right moment a sufficient number of times. Charity had built five porches round the pool, to afford the crowd a shelter, and these, and the great steps leading down to the waters, were constantly thronged, like the steps of a sacred bathing-place to-day on the Ganges.

Among the sufferers was one who had been helplessly crippled by rheumatism[f] or paralysis for thirty-eight years, but still clung to the hope that he would, one day, be healed. He had, apparently, had himself brought from a distant part, for he had no friends on the spot, and, hence, had the pain of many times seeing others, less helpless, crowd into the waters, while he lay on his mat for want of some pitying aid.

Jesus had every motive, at this time, to avoid attracting attention in Jerusalem, for it might rouse the open hostility of the Church authorities, which already only waited an opportunity. The pitiful plight of the sufferer, however, awoke His compassion, and in sympathy for his story, though without committing Himself to his notions, He healed him by a word, telling him to "rise, take up his sleeping-mat, and walk."

The common feelings of humanity, one might have thought, would have followed an act so tender and beautiful, with admiration and hearty approval. But there is no crime that may not be done by fanaticism allied to religious opinions; no deadness to true religion too profound for the championship of fancied orthodoxy. Pity, charity, recognition of worth, or nobleness of act or word, give place to remorseless hatred and bloodthirsty vengeance where there is religious hatred. Inquisitors who sent thousands to the stake for an abstract proposition, or immured them in dungeons, and feasted on their torture for incapacity to repeat some wretched Shibboleth, have been amiable and gentle in all other relations. The hierarchical party in Jerusalem comprised men of all dispositions, and of every shade of sincerity, and its opposite. But it had been touched in its tenderest susceptibilities by the preaching of the Baptist; for it had been called to account, and had had its shortcomings held up before the nation. The instinct of self-preservation, and the conservatism of a priestly and legal order, were instantly roused, and assailed the Reformer with the cry that the Law and the Temple were in danger. The Baptist had already fallen; most likely by their help; but a successor more to be dreaded, had risen in Jesus. They had watched His course

in Galilee with anxiety, which had already shown itself during His first short visit to Jerusalem at the Passover before, and in His subsequent circuits through Judea. Spies, sent from Jerusalem, dogged His steps and noted His words and acts, to report them duly to the ecclesiastical authorities, who had seen more clearly, day by day, that a mortal struggle was inevitable between the old Theocracy and the Innovator. Everything was in their favour. They were in power, and could at any moment bring Him before their own courts on trial, even for life. But they dreaded overt hostility, and for a time preferred to undermine Him secretly, by mooting suspicions among the people of His being a heretic, or affecting to think Him a mere crazed enthusiast. His most innocent sayings were perverted to evil; His purest aims purposely misconstrued. Only the favour of the people, and His own moderation, prudence, and wisdom, warded off open violence.

He had now, however, given a pretext for more decided action than they had yet taken. No feature of the Jewish system was so marked as their extraordinary strictness in the outward observance of the Sabbath, as a day of entire rest. The Scribes had elaborated from the command of Moses, a vast array of prohibitions and injunctions, covering the whole of social, individual, and public life, and carried it to the extreme of ridiculous caricature. Lengthened rules were prescribed as to the kinds of knots which might legally be tied on Sabbath. The camel-driver's knot and the sailor's were unlawful, and it was equally illegal to tie or to loose them. A knot which could be untied with one hand might be undone. A shoe or sandal, a woman's cup, a wine or oil-skin, or a flesh-pot might be tied. A pitcher at a spring might be tied to the body-sash, but not with a cord.

It was forbidden to write two letters, either with the right hand or the left, whether of the same size or of different sizes, or with different inks, or in different languages, or with any pigment; with ruddle, gum, vitriol, or anything that can make marks; or even to write two letters, one on each side of a corner of two walls, or on two leaves of

CH. XXXVIII.

a writing-tablet, if they could be read together, or to write them on the body. But they might be written on any dark fluid, on the sap of a fruit-tree, on road-dust, on sand, or on anything in which the writing did not remain. If they were written with the hand turned upside down, or with the foot, or the mouth, or the elbow, or if one letter were added to another previously made, or other letters traced over, or if a person designed to write the letter ח and only wrote two ו ו, or if he wrote one letter on the ground and one on the wall, or on two walls, or on two pages of a book, so that they could not be read together, it was not illegal. If a person, through forgetfulness, wrote two characters at different times, one in the morning, the other, perhaps towards evening, it was a question among the Rabbis whether he had or had not broken the Sabbath.

The quantity of food that might be carried on Sabbath from one place to another was duly settled. It must be less in bulk than a dried fig: if of honey, only as much as would anoint a wound; if water, as much as would make eye-salve; if paper, as much as would be put in a phylactery; if ink, as much as would form two letters.[7]

To kindle or extinguish a fire on the Sabbath was a great desecration of the day, nor was even sickness allowed to violate Rabbinical rules. It was forbidden to give an emetic on Sabbath—to set a broken bone, or put back a dislocated joint,[8] though some Rabbis, more liberal, held that whatever endangered life made the Sabbath law void, "for the commands were given to Israel only that they might live by them."[9 g] One who was buried under ruins on Sabbath, might be dug for and taken out, if alive, but, if dead, he was to be left where he was, till the Sabbath was over.[10]

The holy day began with sunset on Friday, and ended with the sunset of Saturday, but as the disappearance of the sun was the only mark of the time, its commencement was different on a hill-top and in a valley. If it were cloudy, the hens going to roost was the signal. The beginning and close of the Sabbath were announced by a trumpet from the Temple, and in the different towns. From the decline of the sun on Friday, to its setting, was Sabbath-eve, and no

[7] Schürer, 490.

[8] M Schabb. xxii. 6.

[9] Lev. 18. 5.

[10] Joma, viii. 7.

work which would continue into the hours of Sabbath, could be done in this interval. All food must be prepared, all vessels washed, and all lights kindled, before sunset. The money girdle must be taken off, and all tools laid aside. "On Friday, before the beginning of the Sabbath," said one law, "no one must go out of his house with a needle or a pen, lest he forget to lay them aside before the Sabbath opens. Every one must also search his pockets at that time, to see that there is nothing left in them with which it is forbidden to go out on the Sabbath."[11] The refinements of Rabbinical casuistry were, indeed, endless. To wear one kind of sandals was carrying a burden, while to wear another kind was not. One might carry a burden on his shoulder, but it must not be slung between two.[12] It was unlawful to go out with wooden sandals or shoes which had nails in the soles, or with a shoe and a slipper, unless one foot were hurt.[13] It was unlawful for any one to carry a loaf on the public street, but if two carried it, it was not unlawful.[14] The Sabbath was believed to prevail in all its strictness, from eternity, throughout the universe. All the Rabbinical precepts respecting it had been revealed to Jacob from the originals on the tablets of heaven.[15] Even in hell the lost had rest from their torments on its sacred hours, and the waters of Bethesda might be troubled on other days, but were still and unmoved on this.[16 h]

[11] Orach Chajim, ed. Löwe, p. 55.

[12] Origen; quoted by Gfrörer, i. 18.

[13] Mischna, Schabbath, x. 5.

[14] Gfrörer, i. 18.

[15] B. d. Jubil. c. 50.

[16] Sepp, iv. 35.

In an insincere age such excessive strictness led to constant evasions by Pharisees and Sadducees alike. To escape the restrictions which limited a journey on Sabbath to 2,000 cubits from a town or city, they carried food on Friday evening to a spot that distance beyond the walls, and assumed, by a fiction, that this made that spot also their dwelling. They could thus on the Sabbath walk the full distance to it, and an equal distance beyond it, this journey being only the legal distance from the fictitious place of residence![17] To make it lawful to eat together on the Sabbath the Rabbis put chains across the two ends of a street, in which the members of a special fraternity lived, and called it a single dwelling, while to excuse their carrying the materials of their Sabbath repast to the common hall,

[17] Derenbourg, 142.

they each laid some food in it on Friday evening, to create the fiction of its being part of the common dwelling. The priestly Sadducees, on the other hand, made no scruple to have even the beasts destined for their kitchen driven to their shambles on the Sabbath, on the pretext that their common meals were only a continuation of the Temple service, by which the rest of the Sabbath was not legally broken.

Nor were such equivocations the only liberties taken with the sacred day, for, however uncompromising with others, the Pharisees were disposed to violate the Sabbath laws when occasion demanded. They had one maxim, timidly applied it is true, but still theirs: "The Sabbath is for you, but you are not for the Sabbath;" and another, still bolder, "Make a common day of your Sabbath rather than go to your neighbour for help."[18]

[18] Derenbourg, 143, 144.

The priests and Rabbis, thus secretly indulgent to themselves, but austerely strict before the world, found an opportunity in the cure at Bethesda for parading their hollow puritanism, and at the same time raising a charge against Jesus, for the man had been healed on the Sabbath, and had been told to carry his sleeping-mat[19] with him to his home. This was enough. Met in the street, carrying his pallet, by one of these purists, he had been reprimanded for doing so as contrary to the Law, and had shielded himself by the command of Him who had miraculously cured him. It was not till some time after, when Jesus had come upon him in the Temple, that he knew the name of his benefactor, for Jesus had hurried away from the pool, after curing him, to avoid exciting the multitude round.

[19] See page 94.

It seems from the caution given him at this second meeting, to "sin no more, lest something worse should befall him," as if the man had brought his infirmity on himself by misconduct. Nor did his after-conduct do him much credit. He had no sooner discovered the fact than he went to the officials and told who had healed him. From that moment the doom of Jesus was fixed. Pharisee and Sadducee, Rabbi and priest, forgetting their mutual hatreds, caballed, henceforth, to fasten such accusations upon Him

as would secure His death, and never faltered in their resolve till they carried it out, two years later, on Calvary.

Jesus seems forthwith to have been for the first time cited before the authorities, on the formal charge of Sabbath-breaking; but His judges were little prepared for the tone of His defence. Left to answer for Himself, He threw the assembly into a paroxysm of religious fury by claiming to work at all times for the good of men, since it was only what God, His Father, had done, notwithstanding the Sabbath Law, from the beginning. As His Son, He was as little to be fettered by that Law or subject to it, and was Lord of the Sabbath. The assembly saw what this implied. He had added to His Sabbath desecration the higher crime of blasphemously "making Himself equal with God, by calling Him specially[i] His Father."[20] The excitement must have been great, for Orientals give free vent to their feelings, under any circumstances. Some years after, the same tribunal, with the crowd of spectators, gnashed their teeth at the martyr Stephen in their infuriated bigotry, and cried out with loud voices, and stopped their ears at his words.[21] In all probability a similar storm rose around Jesus now. But He remained perfectly calm, and when silence was in a measure restored, proceeded with His defence against this second charge.

[20] John 5. 19.

[21] Acts 7. 54, 57.

He did not for a moment deny that they were right in the meaning they put on His words, but stated more fully why He used them. It was impossible for Him to act independently of His Father; He could only do so if He were not His Son. There was absolute oneness in the spirit and aim of the works of both, as in those of a son who looks with reverence at the acts of a father, and has no thought but to reproduce them. "My Father, God, in His love for me, the Son, lays ever open before me, in direct self-disclosure, all that He Himself does, that I may do the same. You marvel at my healing the lame man, but the Father will show me greater works than this, that I may repeat them here on earth, and that you may wonder, not in curiosity as now, but in shame at your unbelief."

"Let me tell you," He continued, "what these greater works

CH. XXXVIII.

[22] Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. See also Tob. 13. 2. Wisdom, 16. 13.

are. In your Law it is the special prerogative of the Father to awaken and quicken the dead,[22] but it is mine also, for I, the Son, quicken whom I will. And as to judging men here (as to their spiritual state), it is left to me alone by my Father, that all men may honour me as His representative, as they honour Him. He who does not honour me, the Son, does not honour the Father who sent me. If you wish to know whom I spiritually quicken, they are those who hear my word, and believe Him who sent me, for they have everlasting life even here, and are not under condemnation, but have passed from death to life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the (spiritually) dead will hear my voice—the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it shall live. I thus wake them to life, because the Father has made me the divine fountain of life, as He Himself, the living God, is. He has also given me authority to judge men, because I am the Son of man.

"But marvel not at what I have said of waking and judging the spiritually dead, for I will do yet greater works. I shall one day raise the actually dead from their graves, and will judge them at the great day, raising those that did good in this world to the resurrection of life, and those that did evil to a resurrection of judgment. Nor is there a fear of error, for I can do nothing of myself. I judge as I hear from God, who, in His abiding communion with me, makes known His divine judgment, which, alone, I utter. Hence my judgment cannot err, because I speak only that of God.

"You may say that I am bearing witness respecting myself, and that, therefore, it is of no value, but, if you think thus, there is another that bears witness to me, and ye know that His testimony is true—I mean God, Himself. You sent to John, and he bore witness to the truth. But the testimony I receive is not that of man. I only say these things that you may be saved, by taking John's testimony to heart, and being waked by it to faith in Me, and a share in the salvation which, as the Messiah, I offer you. What a wondrous appearance John was! He was a burning and shining lamp, and you wished for a time to rejoice in his

light, but when you found that he called you to repentance rather than to national glory and worldly prosperity, you forsook him and became his enemies. The light he shed was not of the kind you desired.

"But I have a witness which is greater than that of John. The work which the Father has given me to bring to completion—the work of founding and raising the new kingdom of God, as His Messiah,—this, in all that it implies of outward and spiritual wonders, bears witness that the Father has sent me. And not only does God Himself testify of me indirectly, by my work as His Messiah: He does so directly, in your Scriptures. But ye have not recognized the voice of this testimony, nor realized the image of me it presents. You are spiritually deaf to the one, and blind to the other. Ye have not the true sense of God's word in your consciences, for you do not believe in His Messiah, whom He has sent, and of whom these Scriptures testify. They witness to me as the mediator of eternal life, and, therefore, every one who humbly studies them as the guide to that life, will be pointed by them to me. You search the Scriptures professing to wish to find life, and yet refuse to accept me! How self-contradictory and self-condemning!

"I do not reproach you thus, from any feeling of wounded pride, for I care nothing for the applause of men. I do it because I know the ground of your disbelief—you have not the love of God in your hearts. If you had, you would recognize and receive His Son whom He has sent. I have come in my Father's name, as His commissioned representative—the true Messiah—and you have rejected me with unbelieving contempt, but when a false Messiah comes in his own name, you will receive him! It is no wonder you have rejected me, for how is it possible that such as you could believe, who have no higher craving than to give and accept empty earthly honours, and are indifferent to the only true honour that comes from being acknowledged and praised of God?

"You trust in Moses, who, you think, has promised you favour with God, here and hereafter. Beware! there is no

CH. XXXVIII. need that I should accuse you before my Father, for your unbelief in me. Moses, himself, in the books in which you trust, is your accuser, for if ye had believed his writings ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye be so blinded as neither to see, nor to believe his writings, how will ye believe my words?"

The authorities had never had such a prisoner before them. They knew not what to do with Him, and, in their confusion and utter defeat, could only let Him depart unharmed. They had not yet summoned courage to proceed to open violence.

This was the turning point in the life of Jesus. Until now He had enjoyed a measure of toleration and even of acceptance, but, henceforth, all was changed. Jerusalem was no longer safe for Him, and, even in Galilee, He was dogged by determined enmity.[23] The shadow of the Cross darkened His whole future career.

[23] Ellicott, 142.

Free from His enemies, Jesus appears to have returned at once to Galilee, in the hope, perhaps, that there, far from Jerusalem, with its fierce religious fanaticism and malevolent hypocrisy, He could breathe more freely, in the still and clear air of the hills. But religious hatred is beyond all others intense and persistent. There were Rabbis and priests there, as well as in the south, and they watched His every step.

A fresh occasion for accusation could not be long of rising. He had left Jerusalem immediately after the Passover, and on the Sabbath after the second day of the Feast[k]—or, it may be, a Sabbath later[24]—a new charge was brought against Him. In the short distance which it was lawful to walk on a Sabbath—less than three-quarters of a mile[l]—the path lay through ripening fields of barley—for Nisan, the Passover month, was the ancient Abib, or month of earing, and the first early sheaf was offered on the second day of the Passover. It was by the Law, and by Eastern custom, free to all to pluck ears enough in a corn-field, or grapes enough from a vine, to supply hunger,[25] and the disciples, as every Oriental still does in the same circumstances, availed themselves of this liberty, plucking some

[24] Ewald's Geschichte, v. 380. Bibel Lex. v. 125. Lightfoot, *in loc.* Matt. 12. 1—8. Mark 2. 23—28. Luke 6. 1—5.

[25] Land and Book, 684. Ewald's Alt. 248. Lev. 19. 9. Deut. 24. 19—22; 23. 25. Ruth 2. 2.

ears of the barley, and rubbing them with their hands as they went on. The field must have been near some town, most likely Capernaum, for a number of people were about, and among others, some spies.[m] It was no wonder both He and the disciples were hungry, for no Jew could break his fast till after the morning service at the synagogue, or take supper till after the evening service, but He had sanctioned two offences against the Sabbath laws. The plucking the ears was a kind of reaping, and the rubbing was a kind of grinding or threshing. Besides, it was required that all food should be prepared on Friday, before sunset, and the rubbing was a preparation.[n] On any other day there would have been no cause of blame, but to break the Sabbath rather than suffer hunger for a few hours, was guilt worthy of stoning.[o] Was it not their boast that Jews were known, over the world, by their readiness to die rather than break the holy day? Every one had stories of grand fidelity to it. The Jewish sailor had refused, even when threatened with death, to touch the helm a moment after the sun had set on Friday, though a storm was raging; and had not thousands let themselves be butchered rather than touch a weapon in self-defence on the Sabbath? The "new doctrine" of Jesus would turn the world upside down[26] if not stopped!

[26] Acts 17. 6.

The spies of the hierarchical party, who had seen the offence, at once accused Him for allowing it, but His answer only made matters worse. He reminded them how David, when pressed by hunger, in his flight from Saul, had eaten the holy bread and given it to his followers, though it was not lawful for any but priests to eat it.[27] [p] Did that not show that the claims of nature overrode those of a ceremonial rule? that the necessity of David and his followers was to be considered before the observance of a tradition? The law of nature came from God; the theocratic prohibition was of man. "And have you not read in the Law,"[28] added He, "how the priests work at their duties on the Sabbath, and yet are held blameless, though they are in fact breaking the holy day, if your traditions and rules are to be the unbending standard?[q] What is lawful for the servants of the Temple to do on Sabbath must much more

[27] 1 Sam. 21. 1. Lev. 24. 9.

[28] Numb. 28. 9 f.

be lawful for my servants to do on that day, for I am greater than the Temple. You condemn my disciples because your thoughts are so fixed on outward rites that you have forgotten how God thinks less of them than of acts of mercy. Does He not say,[29] 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice?' It is in your want of mercy that you accuse my followers. They have, besides, acted under my authority. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, as even the Pharisees allow, and therefore, in any case, its laws must give way before human necessities. But I, the Son of Man—the representative of man as man—the Messiah of God—am still higher than any individual man and above all your Sabbath laws."

[29] Hos. 6. 6.

Such a retort and such transcendent claims may well have startled His accusers, but they only deepened their hatred, for bigotry is blind and deaf to any reason. Charge was being added to charge, accusation to accusation. He had claimed the power to forgive sins; He had associated with publicans and sinners; He had shown no zeal for washings or fasts, and, now, He had, a second time, openly desecrated the Sabbath.

His defence had only made His position towards the Pharisaic laws more antagonistic than ever, for it had denied that they were unconditionally binding. Their authority depended on circumstances: they were not owned as directly divine. God had planted a higher law in the human breast, and the system of the Rabbis must yield before it. He had virtually alleged that the time was come to free Israel from the yoke of traditional observance, and to raise a new spiritual kingdom on the imperishable basis of truly divine law.[30] By their system man was subordinated to the Sabbath, not the Sabbath to man. This harshness was not the design or will of God. The Sabbath had been given by Him for the good of man, and was to be a day of refreshment, peace, and joy, not of pain, sorrow, and terror. Jesus, therefore, proclaimed expressly that man is greater than the Sabbath, in direct contradiction to the Pharisaic teaching, which made the Sabbath of immeasurably greater worth than man. Man, and still more Himself, as the representative of humanity, in

[30] Schenkel, 87.

its abiding dignity and rights—the Son of Man—is the Lord of the Sabbath. It was a proclamation of spiritual freedom.

The lowering schoolmen of the day, and the priestly party, felt themselves threatened in their most cherished hopes, wishes, and interests. The breach between them and Jesus had been final, since His half-contemptuous words about the old garment and the old bottles. They had marked Him, definitely, as opposed to traditional Rabbinism, as a dangerous agitator, and an enemy of the venerated "Hedge of the Law," the glory of successive generations of Rabbis. The hierarchy would at once have indicted Him publicly, but for His wide popularity; the devotion felt for Him by the multitudes He had healed or comforted; the transparent singleness of His aims and labours; the gentleness and dignity of His character, which enforced reverence; and His divine humility and lowliness of heart,[31] which made Him so unassailable.

The synagogues were, as yet, open to Him, and He still frequented them, for the facilities they offered of teaching the people. Another violation of the Pharisaic laws of the Sabbath soon followed, in one of the services. He had gone to the synagogue, and was teaching in it, when He noticed a man[32] whose right hand, withered by long-standing local paralysis and its consequent atrophy,[33] hung helpless by his side. Meanwhile, the Scribes and other Pharisees, now constantly on the watch against Him, sat with keen eyes to see if He would venture to break their Sabbath laws once more, by healing the sufferer, who could claim no help till the sacred day was over, as he was in no immediate danger of life. Their fine-spun casuistry had elaborated endless rules for the treatment of all maladies on the sacred day. A person in health was not to take medicine on the Sabbath. For the toothache, vinegar might be put in the mouth, if it were afterwards swallowed, but it must not be spit out again. A sore throat must not be gargled with oil, but the oil might be swallowed. It was unlawful to rub the teeth with sweet spice for a cure, but, if it were done to sweeten the breath, it was permitted. No fomentations, &c., could be put to affected parts of the body.[34] One prohibition I must

[31] Schenkel, 89.

[32] Matt. 12. 9—14. Mark 3. 1—6. Luke 6. 6—11

[33] Bibel Lex. ii. 586

[34] Hor. Heb. ii. 201.

CH. XXXVIII. give in Latin. "Qui pediculum occidit sabb. idem est ac si occideret camelum." The school of Schammai held it unlawful to comfort the sick, or visit the mourner on the Sabbath, but the school of Hillel permitted it.

It was clear, therefore, that, if any cure of the withered hand were attempted, there would be ground for another formal charge of Sabbath-breaking, which brought with it death by stoning.

But Jesus never feared to do right. No thought of self ever came between Him and His witness to the truth. Looking over at His enemies, as they sat on the chief seats, He read their hearts, and felt that fidelity to the very law which His expected action would be held to have broken, demanded that that act be done.

His whole soul was kindled with righteous anger and sorrow at the hardness which forced conscience to be silent, rather than confess the truth. It was needful that such hollowness and wilful perversity should be exposed. As the Son of God—the Messiah—sent to found a kingdom of pure spiritual religion, He felt that the wisdom of the schools, priestly mediation, sacrifices, Temple rites, and Sabbath laws, were only a glittering veil, which shut out the knowledge of eternal truth, alike towards God and towards man. He had taught and healed, announced the kingdom of spirit and truth, cheered the poor, reproved sinners, lifted the humble from the dust, and gathered the godly round Himself. Dull, mechanical obedience to worthless forms; or love, from the fulness of the heart, was now the question, in religion and morals. Should true religion be spread, or error confirmed? [35] Should He silently let blinded men fancy their blind leaders right, or should He brave all, to open their eyes and lead them into the true ways of His Father? Looking at the paralyzed man, He bade him rise from the floor, on which, with the rest of the congregation, he had been sitting,[36] and stand forth in the midst, and, on his doing so, in ready obedience to One so famous, turned once more to the scowling Rabbis on the dais. "Is it lawful on the Sabbath days," He asked them, "to do good, or to do evil, to save life, or to destroy it?" But they held their

[35] Schenkel, 91.

[36] Schürer, 415.

peace, fearing they might commit themselves by answering without careful reflection. "It is allowable, is it not," He resumed, "to lay hold on a sheep which has fallen into a pit on the Sabbath day, and help it out?[37] How much then, is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath." "Stretch forth thy hand," said He, continuing, to the sufferer;—and the hand which, till then, had hung wasted and lifeless at his side, was healthy and strong as the other.

[37] Hor. Heb. ii. 201.

Jesus felt the significance of the moment. He felt that the silence of His accusers was not from conviction, but sullen obstinacy, which had shut its ears against the truth. He felt that, between Him and the leaders of the nation, there was henceforth a hopeless separation. They had finally rejected Him, and could henceforward only seek His destruction. Their fanaticism, now fairly roused, forgot all minor hatreds, and united the hostile factions of the nation in common zeal for His destruction. No parties could be more opposed than the nationalists or Pharisees, and the Friends of Rome[r] gathered round Herod Antipas at Tiberias, but they now united to hunt Jesus to the death. The alliance boded the greatest danger, for it showed that, in addition to religious fanaticism, He had now to encounter the suspicion of designing political revolution. The Church and the State had banded together to put "the deceiver of the people" out of the way as soon as possible.

It had been inevitable from the first that it should be so. The Jerusalem party expected the "Salvation of Israel" from the unconditional restoration of the theocracy, with themselves at its head, and from the strictest enforcement of outward legal observances. While the contrast between Judaism and heathenism was, meanwhile, intensified and embittered to the utmost, they hoped before long to crush Rome, or perish in the attempt. They would have greeted any one who proved able to impose their law, in all its strictness, on mankind,—as a deliverer, as the stem from the root of David, as the Saviour and Messiah. In Jesus, on the contrary, there appeared One who, while constraining their wonder at His lofty morality and spiritual greatness, was

CH. XXXVIII.

the very opposite of all they wished and hoped. He claimed to be the Messiah, but His ideal of the Messiahship was the antithesis of that of the Rabbis and priesthood. He had announced Himself as the founder of a new theocracy more spiritual and more holy than that of Moses. He had thrown a new light on the Scriptures; had revealed God in a new aspect—as no mere national deity, but the Father of all mankind, and He had taught the most startling novelties as to the freedom of the individual conscience. The Rabbis had enjoyed, as their exclusive prerogative, the exposition of Scripture, but now found themselves dethroned by the religious freedom Jesus had proclaimed, and He had even spoken of them as a hindrance of true knowledge. The spirit of His teaching compromised the whole state of things in the religious world. He proclaimed a new future: the vested rights of the day clung to the past, with which their interests and their passions were identified.

The new wine was thus already bursting the old bottles, and the result could not be doubtful. Conservatism felt itself imperilled, for it had been weighed, and found wanting. The priesthood had become a dividing wall between God and Israel. The religious decay of the nation found in it its expression. The sacrifices were mere outward forms; the Temple, notwithstanding the glory with which Herod's love of magnificence and hypocritical piety had adorned it, was a symbol of exclusiveness, intolerance, and hatred of humanity at large; the high officialism of the day, a dam against every reform, every breath of fresh religious thought, and every attempt at a purer spiritual life.[38]

[38] Schenkel, i. 90.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### GALILEE.



THE opposition of the Rabbis and priests, however malignant and fixed, was as yet confined to secret plottings.[1] With the people at large, Jesus continued even increasingly popular. It was advisable, however, to avoid any pretext for overt hostility, and hence He withdrew from Capernaum for a time, on another mission to the towns and villages on the edge of the Lake, till the storm, in a measure, blew over. To the chagrin of His enemies, the multitudes attracted to see and hear Him were larger than ever. The excitement was evidently spreading through all Palestine, for numbers still continued to come from Jerusalem and Idumea on the south; from Perea and Decapolis and other parts on the east, and even from the heathen district round Tyre and Sidon on the north. There were many Jews settled in every part of the land, and the concourse was no doubt of such almost exclusively. It was even found necessary that a boat should attend Him, as He journeyed along the shore, that He might betake Himself to it when the throng grew oppressive. Miraculous cases in great number increased the excitement, many who crowded round Him finding relief by touching even His clothes, and unclean spirits falling down before Him in involuntary confession of His being the Son of God. But though His pity would not refuse to heal any who came, He still sought to avoid the offence of too great notoriety, by requiring secrecy. His gentle and unostentatious progress was in such vivid contrast to the noisy and disputatious ways of the Rabbis, that St. Matthew saw in it a fulfilment of the Messianic visions of Isaiah, for He did not strive, nor cry aloud, nor was His

[1] Matt. 12. 15—21. Mark 3. 7, 12.

CHAP. XXXIX. voice heard in the streets, and in His tender gentleness He would not break a bruised reed, or quench even the smoking flax.[2]

[2] Isaiah 42. 1—3.

The Gospels do not enable us to follow any chronological sequence in the incidents recorded by them, of these months of our Lord's ministry, but it must have been about this time, perhaps on His return to Capernaum, from this mission, that we must date one of the most interesting of their narratives.[3] He had scarcely reached home, after His circuit, when a deputation of "the elders of the Jews" waited on Him. They were the foremost men in the Capernaum community—the governing body of the synagogue, and, as such, the Jewish magistrates of the town. It is the habit in the East to send such embassies when any request is to be made or invitation given with circumstances of special respect,[4] but there was a feature in this case that made it very unusual. The members of the deputation, though Jewish ecclesiastical officials, came as the representatives of a heathen, possibly of a Samaritan. Lying on the edge of his territory, Herod Antipas kept a small garrison in Capernaum, and this, at that time, was under command of a centurion, who, like many of the better heathen of the day, had been drawn towards Judaism by its favourable contrast with idolatry. He had shown his sympathy with the nation, and his generous spirit, in a way then not uncommon among the wealthy, by building a synagogue[5] in the town—perhaps that of which the massive ruins still remain.[6] One of his slaves had been struck with a paralytic affection, and was fast sinking; and with a tenderness that did him infinite honour in an age, when a slave, with many masters, and even in the eye of the Roman law,[a] was treated as a mere chattel, he prayed Jesus, through the Jewish elders,[b] to heal him. Their request was at once complied with, and Jesus forthwith set out with them to the centurion's quarters.

[3] Matt. 8. 5—13. Luke 7. 1—10.

[4] Land and Book, 211.

[5] It is called *the* Synagogue in the Greek text, apparently to mark that it was the only one.

[6] Furrer, 324.

But the zeal of the messengers had outrun their commission, for, as Jesus approached the house, a second deputation met Him, to deprecate His being put to so much trouble, and to apologize, by an humble expression of the centurion's sense of his unworthiness of the honour of such an One

coming under his roof. He, himself, appears to have followed, as if it had been too great a liberty to approach Jesus except at the distance of two mediations. "Lord," said he. "trouble not Thyself; for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof. Wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come to Thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I, also, am a man set under authority (and render obedience to my superiors), and have soldiers under me, and I say to this one, Go, and he goes; to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it. If, therefore, You indicate Your pleasure only by a word, the demons who cause diseases will at once obey You and leave the sick man, for they are under Your authority[c] as my servants are under mine."

Faith so clear, undoubting, and humble, had never before cheered the heart of Jesus, even from a Jew, and, coming as it did from the lips of a heathen, it seemed the first-fruits of a vast harvest, outside the limits of the Ancient People. He had found a welcome in Samaria when rejected in Judea; and now it was from a heathen He received this lowly homage. The clouds that had lain over the world through the past seemed to break away, and a new earth spread itself out before His soul. The kingdom of God, rejected by Israel, would be welcomed by the despised Gentile nations. "Verily," said He, "I tell you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you that many shall come from the east and the west, and lie down at the table of God in the kingdom of the Messiah, as honoured guests, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the Jew, who prided himself on being, by birth, the child of the heavenly kingdom, and despised all others, as doomed to sit in the darkness outside the banquet hall of the Messiah, will have to change places with them!" To His hearers such language would speak with a force to be measured only by their fierce pride and intolerance. To share a grand banquet with the patriarchs in the Messianic kingdom, was a favourite mode with the Jews of picturing the blessedness that kingdom would bring. "In the future world," they made God say, in one of their Rabbinical lessons, "I shall spread for you Jews a

CHAP. XXXIX.

[7] Tanchum, in Schoettgen.

great table, which the Gentiles will see and be ashamed."[7] But now the rejection and despair are to be theirs! The contrast between Jesus and the Rabbis was daily becoming more marked, for now He adds to all else a grand vision of a universal religion, and of a kingdom of the Messiah, no longer national, but sending a welcome to all humanity who will submit to its laws.

"Go thy way," added He, to the centurion, "and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee." And his slave was healed in that very hour.

He had apparently left Capernaum the same day, for we find Him, the next, at a village called Nain, twenty-five miles to the south-west, on the northern slope of "Little Hermon," a clump of hills at the eastern end of the great plain of Esdraelon. It was still the early and popular time of His ministry, and crowds followed Him wherever He appeared. Nain, which is now a poor and miserable hamlet, inhabited only by a few fanatical Mahometans, may then have deserved its name—the beautiful. The only antiquities about it are some tombs hewn in the hills, seen as you approach, beside the road, which winds up, to the village. The presence of the Prince of Life, with a throng of disciples and followers, might well have banished thoughts of sadness, but shadows everywhere lie side by side with the light. As He came near, another procession met Him, descending from Nain, the dismal sounds rising from it, even at a distance, telling too plainly what it was. Death had been busy under these blue summer skies, and its prey was now being borne, amidst the wail of the mourner, to its last resting-place. A colder heart than that of Jesus would have been touched, for it was a case so sad that the whole town had poured forth to show its sympathy with the broken heart that followed next the bier.[d] It was the funeral of a young man, the only son of a widow, now left in that saddest of all positions to a Jew—to mourn alone in the desolated home in which he had died, doubtless only a very few hours before.[e] Moved with the pity at all times an instinct with Him, Jesus could not let the train sweep on. It was not meet that death should reap its triumph in His

presence. Stepping towards the poor mother, He dried up the fountain of her tears by a soft appeal. "Weep not," said He, and then moved to the bier, careless of the defilement which would have made a Rabbi pass as far as he could from the dead. Touching it, those who bore the body at once stood still. It was, doubtless, a mere open frame, like that still used for such purposes in Palestine. "Young man," said He, "I say unto thee, Arise." It was enough. "He that was dead sat up and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother.'

It was at Shunem, now Solani,[8] a village on the other side of the very hill on which Nain stood, that Elisha had raised the only son of the lady who had hospitably entertained him; and the luxuriant plain of Jezreel, stretching out beneath, had been the scene of the greatest events in the life of Elijah, who had raised to life the son of the widow in the Phenician village of Sarepta, on the far northern coast. No prouder sign of their greatness as prophets had lingered in the mind of the nation than such triumphs over the grave, and in no place could such associations have been more rife than in the very scene of the life of both. At the sight of the young man once more alive, the memory of Elijah and Elisha was on every lip, and cries rose on all sides that a great prophet had again risen, and that God had visited His people. Nor did the report confine itself to these upland regions. It flew far and near to Judea in the south, and even to the remote Perea.

[8] Smith's Bible Dictionary.

For now, six months; it may be for more than a year,[f] the Baptist—the one man hitherto recognized, in these days, as a prophet, had lain a prisoner in the dungeons of Machaerus—doubtless, in hourly expectation of death—a man, young in years, but wasted with his own fiery zeal, and now by the shadows of his prison-house. But Antipas had not yet determined what to do with him. Shielding him from the fury of Herodias, and yet dreading to let him go free,[9] he still suffered him, as Felix permitted Paul long afterwards, at Cæsarea, to receive visits from his disciples, as if almost ashamed to confine one so blameless. The rumours of Christ's doings had thus, all along, reached the

[9] Acts 24. 23.

 lofty castle where he lay, and, doubtless, were the one great subject of his thought and conversation. As a Jew, he had clung to Jewish ideas of the Messiah, expecting, apparently, a national movement which would establish a pure theocracy, under Jesus. Why had He left him to languish in prison? Why had He not used His supernatural powers to advance the kingdom of God?

To solve such questions, which could not be repressed, two of his disciples were deputed to visit Jesus, and learn from Himself whether He was, indeed, the Messiah, or whether the nation should still look for another? From first to last, more than sixty claimants of the title were to rise. John might well wonder if the past were not a dream, and Jesus only a herald like himself. He had everything to depress him. A child of the desert, accustomed to its wild freedom, he was now caged in a dismal fortress, with no outlook except black lava-crags, and deep gorges, yawning in seemingly bottomless depths. Burning with zeal, he found himself set aside as if forgotten of God, or of no use in His kingdom. Even the people appeared to have forgotten him, for their fickle applause had begun to lessen, even before his imprisonment. His work seemed to have been without results; a momentary excitement which had already died away. He could not hope for visits from Jesus which could only have given a second prisoner to Machaerus—"the Black Castle."

The reaction from the sense of boundless liberty in the desert to the forced inaction and close walls of a prison, and from the stir and enthusiasm of the great assemblies at the fords of the Jordan, affected even the strong and firm soul of the hero, as similar influences have affected even the bravest hearts since his day. Moses and Elijah had had their times of profound despondency, and it was no wonder that a passing cloud threw its shadow even over the Baptist.

The answer of Jesus was full of calm dignity. Isaiah, the special favourite of John, had given the marks, ages before, by which the Messiah should be known, and these Jesus proceeded at once to display to the disciples sent from Machaerus. Among the crowds around Him, there were

always many who had been attracted by the hope of a miraculous cure of their diseases or infirmities, and these He forthwith summoned to His presence, and healed. John would understand the significance of such an answer, and it left undisturbed the delicacy which shrank from verbal self-assertion. His acts, and, doubtless, the words that accompanied them, were left to speak for Him. It was enough that He should refer them to Isaiah, and to what they had seen. "Go your way, and tell John what you have seen and heard. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them."[10 g] "Tell him, moreover, that I know how he is tempted; but let him comfort himself with the thought that he who holds fast his faith in spite of all fiery trials, and does not reject the kingdom of God because of its small beginnings, and still, spiritual gentleness, so different from the worldly power and glory expected, already has the blessings it is sent to bring."[11]

The messengers had hardly departed, when His full heart broke out into a eulogy on John, tender, lofty, and fervent. "It was no weak and wavering man," said He, "bending this way and that, like the tall Jordan reeds,[h] that ye went out in bands to the desert banks of the Jordan to see! No soft and silken man, tricked out in splendid dress, and living on dainty fare, like the glittering courtiers at Tiberias! John was a prophet of God—aye, the last and the greatest of prophets, for he was sent as the herald to prepare the way for Me, the Messiah! I tell you, among all that have been born of women, a greater and more honoured than John the Baptist has not risen!"

Passing from this tender tribute, which He had already paid to His great forerunner, even before the authorities at Jerusalem,[12] He proceeded, as was meet, to point out the greater privileges enjoyed by His hearers, than even by one so famous. "He was great indeed in the surpassing dignity of his office, as the Herald of the kingdom; yet one far less, but still a member of that kingdom, which is now set up among you, is greater in the honour of his citizenship[13] than he, for he stood outside. But he did a mighty work; he

[10] Isaiah 35. 5; 61. 1. Matt. 11. 2—19 Luke 7. 18—35.

[11] Ewald, v. 431

[12] John 5. 35.

[13] Lightfoot, ii. 191 Meyer, *in loc.*

roused the land to a grand earnestness for the kingdom of the Messiah, and they who were thus stirred by him, are those now being received into it. The prophets and the Law only prophesied of my coming: John announced Me as having come. Believe Me, he was the Elias who was to appear."[k]

To a Jewish audience, no honour could be so great as this, for Elijah was the greatest of all the prophets. "Elijah appeared," says the son of Sirach, "a prophet like fire, and his words burned like a torch. He brought down famine on Israel, and by his stormy zeal, he took it away. Through the Word of the Lord he shut up the heavens, and thrice brought down fire from them. O! how wert thou magnified, O Elijah, by thy mighty deeds, and who can boast that he is thine equal! He raised the dead to life, and brought them from the under world by the word of the Highest. He cast kings to destruction, and the noble from their seats. He received power to punish, on Sinai, and judgments on Horeb. He anointed kings to revenge guilt, and prophets to be his successors. He was carried up in a flaming storm, in a chariot with horses of fire; he is appointed for the correction of times to come, to abate God's wrath before judgment be let loose, to turn the heart of the father to the sons, and to restore the tribes of Jacob. It is well for those who shall behold thee!"[14] All the majesty of the prophetic office seemed incorporate in the Tishbite, and yet this did not seem enough to Jesus to express the dignity of John, for he was more than a prophet, and no greater had ever risen among all the sons of men.[15]

[14] Ecclesiasticus 48. 1—11.

[15] Hausrath, i. 372. Schenkel, 41. Keim, ii. 357—368. Reynolds, 430—432.

The message from John was only the expression of the general feeling which, by its want of spiritual elevation, questioned the Messiahship of Jesus, because He had not realized the national idea of a Jewish hero-king, at the head of a great revolt from Rome, destroying the heathen, and establishing the theocracy by wonders like the dividing of the Red Sea, or the thunderings of Sinai. It struck home to the heart of the Saviour, that even His Herald should have no higher or worthier conception of the true nature of the kingdom of God,—that even he, so near the light,—should

have caught so little of its brightness. No wonder the people, as a mass, rejected Him. How long had He taught in the towns of Galilee, and yet how disproportionately small was the number He had really won, in spite of the throngs who had pressed with eager curiosity and wonder round Him, and the respect He had excited by His teachings! His heart was bowed with sorrow. He had come to His own, and His own did not receive Him. Infinite love and pity for them filled His soul, for He was Himself a son of Israel, and would fain have led His brethren into the New Kingdom, as the first-fruits of the nations. But they refused to let themselves be delivered from the spiritual and moral slavery under which they had long sunk. The yoke of the Romans was not their greatest misfortune. That of the dead letter, and of frozen forms and formulæ, which chilled every nobler aspiration, and shut up the heart against true repentance, and practical holiness, was a far greater calamity. Even their highest ideal—the conception of the Messiah—had become a heated fantastic dream of universal dominion, apart from religious reform. A glimpse of other fields, which promised a richer harvest, had, however, lifted His spirit to consoling thoughts, for the heathen centurion had shown the faith which was wanting in Israel. His homage had been like the wave-offering before God, of the first sheaf of the Gentile world! Heathenism might be sunk in error and sin, crime and lust, and all moral confusion might reign widely in it; there was more hope of repentance and a return to a better life, from heathen indifference or guilt, than from Jewish insane, self-righteous pride.[16]

The crowd of despised common people and publicans,[17] to whom Jesus had addressed His eulogy of John, received it with delight, for they had themselves been baptized by the now imprisoned prophet. There were not wanting others, however, whom it greatly offended—the Pharisees and Scribes present for no friendly purpose. With the instinct of monopoly, they condemned at once whatever had not come through the legitimate channels of authorized teaching. They had gone out to John, but with the foregone conclusion to hear, criticize, and reject him with supercilious contempt,

[16] Schenkel, 163

[17] Matt. 11. 16—30. Luke 7. 29—35

as only fit for the vulgar. Though a priest's son, he was virtually a layman, for he had not been duly ordained. He might be good enough in his way, but he was not a Rabbi. He was almost guilty of schism, like Korah. He was not licensed by the authorities, and yet preached, as, indeed, for that matter, was the case with Jesus Himself. The bitter hostility both John and He had met, rose the more in the Saviour's mind at the sight of the Rabbis on the skirts of the crowd, and the sadness and indignation of His heart broke out in stern denunciation. "To what shall I liken the men of this generation? They are like children in the empty market-places, playing at marriages and mournings; some making music on the flute for the one; some acting like mourners for the other; but neither the cheerful piping, nor the sad beating on the breast, pleasing the companion audience. John the Baptist came upholding the traditions and customs of you Rabbis; for he fasted, and paid attention to washings, and set prayers, and enjoined these on his disciples; but you said he was too strict, and would have nothing to do with him, and that he spoke in so strange a way because he had a devil. I came eating and drinking—neither a Nazarite like John, nor requiring fasts like him; nor avoiding the table of all but the ceremonially pure, like the Pharisees; and you say I am too fond of eating and of wine, and still worse, am a friend of the publicans and sinners you despise. But the true divine wisdom which both he and I have proclaimed is justified by those who honour and follow it, for they know its surpassing worth, though you treat it as folly! The divine wisdom of both his and my coming as we have come, is vindicated by all who humbly seek to be wise, and the folly of men is seen in their fancied wisdom."

He would fain have led all to whom He had preached in His frequent journeys, into the ways of peace. But tender though He was, He was also stern, when stolid obduracy shut its eyes on the sacred light He had brought to them. Most of His mighty works had been done, and most of His no less mighty words had been spoken, in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, the district which He had made His

home. But they had led to no general penitence. With a voice of unspeakable sadness, mingled with holy wrath, He denounced such wilful perversity. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works I have done in you had been done even in Tyre and Sidon, the types of besotted heathenism, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the Day of Judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, exalted to heaven by my dwelling and working in you, shalt be thrust down to Hades, at the Day of Judgment; for if the mighty works I have done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the Day of Judgment, than for thee!"



It would seem as if at this point, some communication that pleased Him had been made to Jesus. Perhaps His disciples had told Him of some success obtained among the simple crowds to whom they had preached the New Kingdom. Whatever it was, He broke forth on hearing it into thanksgiving: "I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid the things of Thy Kingdom from those who are thought, and who think themselves wise, and qualified to judge—the Rabbis, and Priests, and Pharisees—and hast revealed them to simple souls, unskilled in the wisdom of the schools. I thank Thee that what is well-pleasing to Thee has happened thus!" The New Kingdom was not to rest on the theology of the schoolmen of the day, or on official authority, or on the sanction of a corrupt Church, or on the support of privileged classes, but upon child-like faith and humble love. It was not to spread downwards, from among the powerful and influential, but to rise from among the weak and ignoble, the poor and lowly, who would receive it in love and humility. It was to spread upwards by no artificial aids, but by the attractions of its own heavenly worth alone. It was a vital condition of its nature that it should, for it could only be received in sincerity, where its unaided spiritual beauty won the heart.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Among the "babes" were doubtless included the confessors to be won from the world at large, and not from Israel alone, for the law of growth from below upwards, is that of religious movements in all ages and countries. All reformations begin with the laity, and with the obscure. Jesus had nothing to hope but everything to fear from the privileged classes, the learned guilds, the ecclesiastical authorities, and the officials of the Church generally. It sounds startling to read of His thanking God that these all-powerful classes showed neither sympathy for the New Kingdom founded by Him, nor even the power of comprehending it, and that it was left to the simple and child-like minds of the common people, in their freedom from prejudice, to embrace it with eagerness. It was because He saw in the fact, the divine law of all moral and religious progress. New epochs in the spiritual history of the world always spring like seeds, in darkness and obscurity, and only show themselves when they have already struck root in the soil. The moral and religious life, finds an unnoticed welcome in the mass of the people, when the higher ranks of lay, and even of ecclesiastical society, are morally and spiritually effete, unfit to introduce a reform, and bound by their interests to things as they are.[18]

[18] Schenkel, i. 168.

The overflowing fulness of heart, which had found utterance in prayer, added a few sentences more, of undying interest and beauty. It might be feared that, if old guides were forsaken, those who took Him for their leader might find Him unequal to direct them aright. To dispel any such apprehension He draws aside the veil from some of the awful mysteries of His nature and His relation to the Eternal, in words which must have strangely comforted the simple souls who heard them first, and which still carry with them a spiritual support, intensified by their awful sublimity as the words of one, in outward seeming, a man like ourselves.

"All things concerning the New Kingdom are delivered unto me of my Father—its founding, its establishment, its spread. I am, therefore, the king and leader of the new people of God—the head of the new Theocracy, divinely commissioned to rule over it. All that I teach I have

received from my Father. I speak, in all things, the mind of God, and thus you are for ever safe. No one knows fully what I am, and what measure of gifts I have received as Messiah, but the Father, who has commissioned and sent me forth—Me, His Son. Nor does any man know the Father, in His counsels for the salvation of man, as I His Son do, and those to whom I make Him known. I am the true Light, who alone can lighten men, the one true Teacher, who cannot mislead.[19]

"Come unto me, therefore, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden with the burden of rites and traditions of men, which your teachers lay on you—you, who can find no deliverance from the misery of your souls, by all these observances, and I will give your spirits rest. Cast off their heavy yoke and take mine, and learn of me, for I am not hard and haughty like your Rabbis, but meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls. For the yoke I lay on you—the law I require you to honour—is not like that which you have hitherto borne, but brings health to the spirit, and my burden is light, for it is the Law of love."[20]

Language like this, briefly expanded, for greater clearness, demands reverent thought. Who does not feel that such words could not fall from the lips of a sinful man, but only from those of One whose nature and life lay far above all human imperfection? Who, even of the highest, or wisest, or best, of human teachers, could invite *all*, without exception, to come to Him, with the promise that He would give them true rest for their souls?[21] And who, in doing so, could speak of it as a thing apparent to all who heard Him, that He was meek and lowly in heart? Who would think of claiming the stately dignity of sole representative of the Unseen God, and who could speak of God as His Father, in the same way as Jesus? And who would dare to link Himself with the Eternal in a Communion so awful and an inter-revelation so absolute? He makes us feel that as we listen we are face to face with the Incarnate Divine.

[19] Kuinoell Comment. *in loc.*

[20] Meyer, *in loc*

[21] Ullmann, 73, 74. Hillel, u. Jesus, 17. Schenkel, 169. Keim's Christus, 40, 41. Weidemann, Darstellungen, 5.

## CHAPTER XL.

### DARKENING SHADOWS.—LIFE IN GALILEE.

CHAP. XL.

THE rupture with the hierarchical party was not as yet so pronounced as to prevent a more or less friendly intercourse between Jesus and some of its members. An incident connected with one happened about this time.

A Pharisee of the name of Simon, who seems to have been in good social position, had met with Jesus in some of the Galilæan towns, and had been so attracted by Him that he invited Him to his house, to eat with him. This was a mark of high consideration from one of a party so strict, for a Pharisee was as careful as a Brahmin is, with whom he ate. Defilement was temporary loss of caste, and neutralized long-continued effort to attain a higher grade of legal purity, and it lurked, in a thousand forms, behind the simplest acts of daily life and intercourse.[1] To invite one who was neither a Pharisee, nor a member of even the lowest grade of legal guilds, was amazing liberality in a Jewish precisian. It would seem as if the courtesy had already excited timid fear of having gone too far, when Jesus accepted the invitation,—and had given place to a cold patronizing condescension, which fancied it had conferred, rather than received, an honour by His presence.

In the earlier ages of the nation it had been the habit to sit at meals[2] on mats, with the feet crossed beneath the body, as at present in the East—round a low table—now, only about a foot in height. But the foreign custom of reclining on cushions, long in use among the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, had been introduced into Palestine apparently as early as the days of Amos,[3] and had become general in those of Christ. Raised divans, or table couches,

[1] Jost, I. 202

[2] Judges 19. 6. 1 Sam. 20. 5, 24. 1 Kings 13. 20. Prov. 23. 1.

[3] Amos 6. 4, 7. (cir. B.C. 790).

provided with cushions and arranged on three sides of a square, supplied a rest for guests, and on these they lay on their left arm, with their feet at ease behind them, outside. The place of honour was at the upper end of the right side, which had no one above it, while all below could easily lean back on the bosom of the person immediately behind. Hospitality among the poor was prefaced by various courtesies and attentions to the guest, more or less peculiar to the nation. To enter a house except with bare feet was much the same as our doing so without removing the hat, and, therefore, all shoes and sandals were taken off, and left at the threshold. A kiss on the cheek, from the master of the house, with the invocation "The Lord be with you," conveyed a formal welcome, and was followed, on the guest taking his place on the couch, by a servant bringing water and washing the feet, to cool and refresh them, as well as to remove the dust of the road and give ceremonial cleanness. The host himself, or one of his servants, next anointed the head and beard of the guests with fragrant oil, attention to the hair being a great point with Orientals. Before eating, water was again brought to wash the hands, as the requirements of legal purity demanded, and from the fact that the food was taken by dipping the fingers, or a piece of bread, into a common dish. "To wash the hands before a meal," says the Talmud, "is a command; to do so during eating is left matter of choice, but, to wash them after it, is a duty."[4]

With all Jews, but especially with scrupulous formalists like the Pharisees, religious observances formed a marked feature in every entertainment, however humble, and, as these were duly prescribed by the Rabbis, we are able to picture a meal like that given to Jesus by Simon.[a]

Houses in the East are far from enjoying the privacy we prize so highly. Even at this time, strangers pass in and out at their pleasure, to see the guests, and join in conversation with them and with the host.[b] Among those who did so, in Simon's house, was one at whose presence in his dwelling, under any circumstances, he must have been equally astonished and disturbed. Silently gliding into the

[4] Tract. Cholin 105.

[a] Luke 7. 36—50

chamber, perhaps to the seat round the wall, came a woman, though women could not with propriety make their appearance at such entertainments. She was, moreover, unveiled, which, in itself, was contrary to recognized rules. In the little town every one was known, and Simon saw, at the first glance, that she was no other than one known to the community as a poor fallen woman. She was evidently in distress, but he had no eyes or heart for such a consideration. She had compromised his respectability, and his frigid self-righteousness could think only of itself. To eat with publicans or sinners was the sum of all evils to a Pharisee. It was the approach of one under moral quarantine, whose very neighbourhood was disastrous, and yet, here she was, in his own house.

A tenderer heart than his, however, knew the deeper aspects of her case, and welcomed her approach. She had listened to the words of Jesus, perhaps to His invitation to the weary and heavy-laden to come to Him for rest, and was bowed down with penitent shame and contrition, which were the promise of a new and purer life. Lost, till now, to self-respect, an outcast for whom no one cared, she had found in Him that there was a friend of sinners, who beckoned even the most hopeless to take shelter by His side. In Him and His words hope had returned, and in His respect for her womanhood, though fallen, quickening self-respect had been once more awakened in her bosom. She might yet be saved from her degradation; might yet retrace her steps from pollution and sorrow, to a pure life and peace of mind. What could she do but seek the presence of One who had won her back from ruin? What could she do but express her lowly gratitude for the sympathy He alone had shown; the belief in the possibility of her restoration that had itself restored her!

The object of her visit was not, however, long a mystery. Kneeling down behind Jesus, she proceeded to anoint His feet with fragrant ointment, but as she was about to do so, her tears fell on them so fast that she was fain to wipe them with her long hair, which, in her distress, had escaped its fastenings. To anoint the head was the usual course, but

she would not venture on such an honour, and would only make bold to anoint His feet. Unmindful of her disorder, which Simon coldly noted as an additional shame, she could think only of her benefactor. Weeping and wiping away the tears, and covering the feet with kisses,[c] her heart gave itself vent till it was calmed enough to let her anoint them, and, meanwhile, Jesus left her to her lowly, loving will.

The Pharisee was horrified. That a Rabbi should allow such a woman, or, indeed, any woman, to approach him, was contrary to all the traditions, but it was incredibly worse in One whom the people regarded as a prophet. He would not speak aloud, but his looks showed his thoughts. "This man, if He were a prophet, would have known what kind of woman this is that touches Him, for she is a sinner."

Jesus saw what was passing in his mind, and turning to him, requested an answer to a question. "There was a certain creditor," said He, "who had two debtors. The one owed him five hundred pence, the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?" Utterly unconscious of the bearing of these words on himself, the Pharisee readily answered that he supposed he to whom the creditor forgave most, would love him most. "Thou hast rightly judged," replied Jesus. Then like Nathan with David, He proceeded to bring the parable home to his conscience.

Turning to the weeping, penitent woman at His feet, and pointing to her, He continued, "Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet, as even courtesy demanded; but she has washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I entered, has not ceased to kiss my feet tenderly. Thou didst not anoint my head with oil; but she has anointed my feet with ointment. I say unto thee, therefore, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much, but one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." Then addressing the sobbing woman herself, He told her, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith has saved thee: go in peace!"

CHAP. XI.

That He should claim to forgive sins had already raised a charge of blasphemy against Him, and it did not pass unnoticed now. But the time had not yet come for open hostility, and His words, in the meanwhile, were only treasured up to be used against Him hereafter.

We are indebted to a notice in St. Luke[5] for a glimpse of the mode of life of Jesus in these months. He seems to have spent them in successive circuits, from Capernaum as a centre, through all the towns and villages of Galilee, very much as the Rabbis were accustomed to do over the country at large. In these journeys He was attended by the Twelve, and by a group of loving women, attracted to Him by relationship, or by His having healed them of various diseases; who provided, in part, at least, for His wants, and those of His followers. That He was not absolutely poor, in the sense of suffering from want, is implied in His recognition as a Rabbi, and even as a prophet, which secured Him hospitality and welcome, as an act of supreme religious merit, wherever He went. To entertain a Rabbi was to secure the favour of God, and it was coveted as a special honour.[6] Thus, though He had no home He could call His own, He would never want ready welcome in the homes of others wherever He went, so long as popular prejudice was not excited against Him. The cottage of Lazarus at Bethany[7] was only one of many that opened its doors to Him, and He could even reckon on a cheerful reception so confidently, as to invite Himself to houses like that of Zaccheus,[8] or that of him in whose upper room He instituted the Last Supper. Many disciples, or persons favourably inclined, were scattered over the land.[d] The simplicity of Eastern life favoured such kindly relations, and hence His personal support would be freely supplied, except in desert parts, or when He was journeying through Samaria, or distant places on the frontiers of Galilee.[9] The willing gifts of friends, thrown into a common fund, supplied so fully all that was needed in such cases, that there was always a surplus from which even to give to the poor.[10]

The names of some of the group of women who thus attended Jesus have been handed down as a fitting tribute

[5] Chap. 8. 12.

[6] Gfrörer, i. 144.

[7] John 12. 1.

[8] Luke 19. 5.

[9] Matt. 14. 17. John 4. 8.

[10] John 12. 5; 13. 29. Hase's Leben Jesu, 136. Schleiermacher's Leben Jesu, 191.

to their devotion, while those of the men who followed Him, with the exception of the twelve apostles, are lost. The religious enthusiasm of the age, always seen most in the gentler sex, had already spread among all Jewish women, for the Pharisees found them their most earnest supporters.[11] It was only natural, therefore, that Jesus should attract a similar devotion. His purity of soul, His reverend courtesy to the sex, His championship of their equal dignity with man, before God, and His demand for supreme zeal in all, in the spread of the New Kingdom, drew them after Him. But so accustomed were all classes to such attendance on their own Rabbis, that even the enemies of Jesus found no ground for censure in their ministrations.

[11] Jos. Ant. xvii. 2. 4; xviii. 1. 3; xiii. 10 6.

Of these earliest mothers of the Church, five are named. Mary, or Miriam, of the town of Magdala, from whom Jesus had cast seven devils; Johanna, the wife, not the widow, of Chuoza, a high official in the palace of Herod Antipas, at Tiberias; Susanna, of whom only the name is known; Mary, the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and wife of Klopas; and Schelamith, or Salome, mother of James and John, and wife of Zebedee or Zabdai, perhaps, also, the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus,[12] as Mary, the wife of Klopas, is also thought by many to have been. Of the other three, whom Jesus had cured of various diseases, a surpassing interest attaches to Mary Magdalene, from her unfounded identification with the fallen penitent who did Jesus honour in the house of the Pharisee Simon. There is nothing whatever to connect her with that narrative, for it confounds what the New Testament distinguishes by the clearest language, to think of her having led a sinful life from the fact of her having suffered from demoniacal possession. Never, perhaps, has a figment so utterly baseless obtained so wide an acceptance as that which we connect with her name.[13] But it is hopeless to try to explode it, for the word has passed into the vocabularies of Europe as a synonym of penitent frailty.

[12] John 19. 25. Matt. 27. 56. Winer, *Art.* "Salome." De Wette, Handbuch d. N. Test. *in loc*

[13] Smith's Dicty *Art.* "Mary Magdalene."

Mary appears to have belonged to the village of Magdala, or Migdol—the Tower—about three miles north of Tiberias, on the water's edge, at the south-east corner of the plain of

CHAP. XL.

Gennesareth. It is now represented by the few wretched hovels which form the Mohammedan village of El-Mejdel, with a solitary thorn-bush beside it, as the last trace of the rich groves and orchards, amidst which it was, doubtless, embowered, in the days of our Lord. A high limestone rock, full of caves, overhangs it on the south-west, and beneath this, out of a deep ravine at the back of the plain, a clear stream rushes past to the sea, which it enters through a tangled thicket of thorn, and willows, and oleanders, covered in their season with clouds of varied blossoms. Who Mary was, or what, no one can tell, but legend, with a cruel injustice, has associated her name for ever with the spot now sacred to her, as the lost one reclaimed by Jesus.[14]

The circle which thus attended Him on His journeys was peculiar, above all things, in an age of intense ritualism, by its slight care for the external observances and mortifications, which formed the sum of religion with so many. This simplicity was made the great accusation against Jesus, as, in after times, the absence of sacrifices and temples led the heathen to charge Christianity with atheism.[15] Even the initiatory rite of baptism had fallen into abeyance, and fasting, and the established rules for prayer and ceremonial purifications were so neglected, as to cause remark and animadversion.[16] There is, indeed, great reason for the belief of some, that Jesus and His followers differed, alike in dress, demeanour, mode of life, and customs, from the teachers of the day and their followers.[17] The simple tunic and upper garment may have had the Tallith worn by all other Jews, but we may be certain that the tassels at its corners were in contrast to the huge, ostentatious size[18] affected by the Rabbis. Nor can we imagine that either Jesus, or the Twelve, sanctioned by their use the superstitious leathern phylacteries[e] which others bound, with long fillets, on their left arm and their forehead, at prayers. The countless rules, then, as now, in force for the length of the straps, for the size of the leather cells to hold the prescribed texts—for their shape, manufacture, &c., and even for the exact mode of winding the straps round the arm, or tying them on the

14 *Art.* "Magdala," in Winer, Bibel Lex., Smith's Dicty., and Herzog.

15 Minuc. F. Octav. 10. 8.

16 Matt. 9. 14; 12. 1; 15. 1. Luke 5. 33.

17 Keim, ii. 281.

18 Matt. 23. 5.

forehead—marked too strongly the cold, mechanical conceptions of prayer then prevailing, to let us imagine that our Lord or the disciples wore them. There was no such neglect of His person as many of His contemporaries thought identical with holiness, for He did not decline the anointing of His head or beard, or the washing of His feet, at each resting-place.[19] Nor did He require ascetic restrictions at table, for we find Him permitting the use of wine, bread, and honey,[f] and of fish, flesh, and fowl.[20] In Peter's house He invited others to eat with Him, and He readily accepted invitations, with all the customary refinements of the kiss of salutation, and foot-washing, and anointing even with the costliest perfume.[21] The Pharisee atoned for his occasional entertainments by fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, but Jesus exposed Himself to the charge of indulgence, because He never practised even such intermittent austerities.[22] Expense was, however, the exception and not the rule, for He praised the Baptist for having nothing costly or effeminate in his dress, and He enjoined the strictest moderation, both in dress and living,[23] on His disciples.

It is the great characteristic of Jesus that He elevated the common details of life to the loftiest uses, and ennobled even the familiar and simple. In His company, the evening meal, when not forgotten in the press of overwhelming labours, was an opportunity always gladly embraced for informal instruction, not only to the Twelve, but to the many strangers whom the easy manners of the East permitted to gather in the apartment.[24] After evening devotions, the family group invited the familiar and unconstrained exchange of thought, in which Jesus so much delighted. As the Father and Head of the circle, He would, doubtless, use the form of thanks and of blessing hallowed by the custom of His nation, opening the meal by the bread and wine being passed round to be tasted by each, after acknowledgment of the bounty of God and His gifts. Then would follow a word to all, in turn: the story of the day, and each one's share in it, would be reviewed with tender blame, or praise, or counsel; and the faith, and hope, and love of all would be refreshed by their very meeting round the table. How dear these hours of

[19] Matt. 6. 16; 26. 6. Luke 7. 44

[20] Matt. 11. 19; 7. 10; 10. 29; 14. 17. Luke 24. 42. John 21. 13. Hase's Leben Jesu, 139.

[21] Matt. 8. 15; 9. 10; 26. 6. Luke 7. 36; 10. 40; 11. 37 14. 1. Mark 14. 3.

[22] Matt. 11. 19; 23. 6, 25.

[23] Matt. 11. 8; 8. 20; 10. 9. Compare Philipp. 4. 12.

[24] Matt. 9. 10. Luke 22 14; 20. 14, 28, f.

CHAP. XL.

quiet home life were to Jesus Himself, is seen in the tenderness with which He saw, in the group they brought around Him, His "children,"—as if they replaced in His heart the household affections of the family; and in the pain, and almost womanly fondness, with which He hesitated to pronounce His last farewell to them. To the disciples themselves, they grew to be an imperishable memory, which they were fain, in compliance with their Master's wish, to perpetuate daily, in their breaking of bread. The greatness and condescension, the loving familiarity and fond endearments of close intercourse, the peace and quiet after the strife of the day, the feeling of security under His eye and care, made these hours a recollection that grew brighter and more sacred with the lapse of years, and deepened the longing for His return, or for their departure to be with Him.

In this delightful family life there was, however, nothing like communism, for there is not a trace of the property of each being thrown into a common fund. His disciples had, indeed, left all; but they had not sold it, to help the general treasury.[25] Some of them still retained funds of their own,[26] and the women who accompanied them still kept their property.[27] When Jesus paid the Temple tax for Himself, He did not think of doing so for His disciples as well. It was left to them to pay for themselves. The simple wants of each day were provided by free contributions, when not proffered by hospitality, nor did He receive even these from His disciples, though Rabbis were permitted to accept a honorarium from their scholars. "Ye have received for nothing," said He, "give for nothing."[28] He took no gifts of money from the people, nor did He let His disciples collect alms, as the Rabbis did their scholars. The only bounty He accepted was the hospitality and shelter always ready for Him in friendly Galilee. From the generous women who followed Him, He, indeed, accepted passing support, but, in contrast to the greed of the Rabbis, He used their liberality only for the need of the moment. His little circle was never allowed to suffer want, but was always able to distribute charity, and, though He seems to have carried no money, He expressly distinguishes both Himself and His disciples from the poor.[29]

[25] Matt. 19. 27; 19. 21.

[26] Matt. 10. 9.

[27] Luke 8. 3.

[28] Matt. 10. 8. Luke 8. 1.

[29] Luke 22. 35. Matt. 10. 9; 17. 27; 26. 9. John 13. 29. Schleiermacher's Leben Jesu, 192.

His presence among His disciples was seldom, even for a brief interval, interrupted. He might be summoned to heal some sick person, or invited to some meal; or He might wish to be alone, for a time, in His chamber or among the hills, while He prayed, but these were absences of only a few hours. It would seem as if the kiss of salutation in such cases greeted His return.[30] He gave the word for setting out on a journey, or for going by boat, and the disciples procured what was needed by the way, if by land, and plied the oar, if on the Lake.[31]

He always travelled on foot, and was often thankful for a draught of water, as He toiled along the hot sides of the white hills, or for a piece of bread, procured in some village through which He passed.[32] Sometimes He went with His disciples, sometimes before them; leaving them to their own conversation, but noting and reproving, at once, their misunderstandings, or momentary misconceptions.[33]

When a resting-place had to be found for the night, He was wont to send on some of His disciples before, or He awaited an invitation on His arrival; His disciples sharing the proffered hospitality, or distributing themselves in other houses.[34] The entertainment must have varied in different dwellings, from the simplicity of the prophet's chamber where the Shunamite had provided a bed, a table, a stool, and a lamp, to the friendship, and busy womanly ministrations, and homage of lowly discipleship, of homes like the cottage of Bethany. Where He was welcomed, He entered with the invocation, "Peace be to this house"—but, unlike the Pharisees—without asking any questions as to the levitical cleanness of the house, or its tables, or benches, or vessels.[35] It was very rarely, one would suppose, that He was not gladly received, but when at any time He met inhospitality, He only went on to the next village. Sometimes He bore His rejection silently, but at others, moved at their hardness, He shook the very dust of the town from His feet on leaving it, as a protest. When meekness could be shown He showed it, but where the circumstances demanded, He was as stern as commonly He was gentle.[36]

It is not easy to realize the daily life of One so different

[30] Matt. 26. 49.

[31] Matt. 8. 18; 16. 5, 7.

[32] Matt. 10. 42. Mark 6. 36.

[33] Matt. 16. 6; 18. 1; 20. 24 Mark 10. 32.

[34] Matt. 21. 1. Luke 9. 52. Matt. 10. 11.

[35] Matt. 10. 11, 14

[36] Keim, ii. 282—286.

from ourselves as Jesus, but a fine poetical mind has imagined the scene of the healing of Mary Magdalene, and the appearance and acts of Christ so finely, that I borrow some passages from his pen.[37]

[37] Delitzsch, Ein Tag, &c., 120 ff.

The landing-place at Capernaum was at the south side of the town. Thither the boats came that brought over wood from the forests of Gaulonitis, and thither the boat steered that bore Jesus, His four earliest disciples acting as boatmen. He had been on the other side of the Lake, and had returned now, in the evening. The sun was just setting, but a few beams seemed to have lingered to die away on His face, and the full moon rose, as if to see Him from behind the brown hills still bathed in purple. The soft evening wind had risen to cool His brow, and the waters, sparkling in the moonlight, rose and fell round the boat, and gently rocked it. As it touched the shore there were few people about, but a boat from Magdala lay near, with a sick person in it, whom it had taken her mother's utmost strength to hold, and keep from uttering loud cries of distress. She had been brought in the hope of finding Jesus, that He might cure her.

"Master," said John, "there is work yonder for you already." "I must always be doing the work of Him that sent me," replied Jesus; "the night cometh when no man can work." The mother of the sick woman had recognized Him at the first glance, for no one could mistake Him, and forthwith cried out with a heart-rending voice, "O Jesus, our helper and teacher, Thou messenger of the All-Merciful, help my poor child,—for the Holy One, blessed be His name, has heard my prayer that we should find Thee, and Thou us." Peter forthwith, with the help of the other two, who had let their oars rest idly on the water, turned the boat, so that it lay alongside the one from Magdala. Jesus now rose; the mother sank on her knees; but the sick woman tried with all her might to break away, and to throw herself into the water, on the far side of the boat. The boatman, however, and John, who had sprung over, held her by the arms, while her mother buried her face in the long plaited hair of her child. Her tears had ceased to flow; she was lost in silent prayer. "Where are these people from?" asked Jesus of the

boatman, and added, to His disciples, when He heard that she came from Magdala, "Woe to this Magdala, for it will become a ruin for its wickedness! The rich gifts it sends to Jerusalem will not help it, for, as the prophet says, 'They are bought with the wages of uncleanness, and to that they will again return.'"[38] "Turn her face to me that I may see her," added He. It was not easy to do this, for the sick one held her face, bent over, as far as possible, towards the water. John managed it, however, by kind words. "Mary," said he, for he had asked her mother her name, "do you wish to be for ever under the power of demons? See, the conqueror of demons is before thee, look on Him, that you may be healed. We are all praying for you, as Moses, peace be to him, once prayed for his sister,—'O God, heal her.' Do not put our prayer to shame; now is the moment when you can make yourself and your mother happy." These words told; and no longer opposing strength to strength, she let them raise her head, and turn her face to Jesus. But when she saw Him, her whole body was so violently convulsed, that the boat swayed to and fro, and she shrieked out the most piercing wails, which sounded far over the Lake.



[38] Micah i. 7.

Jesus, however, fixed His eyes on hers, and kept them from turning away, and as He gazed, His look seemed to enter her soul, and break the sevenfold chain in which it lay bound.[g] The poor raving creature now became quiet, and did not need to be held; her convulsions ceased, the contortions of her features, and the wildness of her eyes, passed off, and profuse sweat burst from her brow, and mingled with her tears. Her mother stepped back, and the healed one sank down on the spot where her mother had been praying, and muttered, with subdued trembling words, to Jesus,—"O Lord, I am a great sinner; is the door of repentance still open for me?" "Be comforted, my daughter," answered He, "God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; thou hast been a habitation of evil spirits, become now a temple of the living God." The mother, unable to restrain herself, broke out—"Thanks to Thee, Thou Consolation of Israel," but He went on,—"Return now, quickly, to Magdala, and be calm, and give thanks to God in silence." John stepped

back into the boat to Jesus, and the other boat shot out into the Lake, on the way home. The two women sat on the middle seat. Mary held her mother in her arms in grateful thanks, and neither spoke, but both kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, till the shore, jutting out westwards, hid Him from their sight.

When the boat with the women was gone, Peter bound his to the post to which the other had been tied, but Jesus sat still in deep thought, without looking round, and the disciples remained motionless beside Him, for reverence forbade them to ask Him to go ashore. Meanwhile, the people of Capernaum, men, women, and children, streamed down in bands; some soldiers of the Roman-Herodian garrison, and some strange faces from Perea, Decapolis, and Syria, among them.

The open space had filled, and now Peter ventured to whisper, in a low voice which concealed his impatience, "Marānu wē Rabbinu—Our Lord and Master—the people have assembled and wait for Thee." On this Jesus rose. Peter made a bridge from the boat to the shore with a plank, hastening across to make it secure, and to open the way; for the crowd was very dense at the edge of the water. Christ now left the boat, followed by the three other disciples, and, when He had stepped ashore, said to Peter,—"Schim'ōn Kêfâ"—for thus He addressed him when He had need of his faithful and zealous service in the things of the kingdom of God—"I shall take my stand under the palm-tree yonder." It was hard, however, to make way through the crowd, for those who had set themselves nearest the water were mostly sick people, to whom the others, from compassion, had given the front place. Indeed, Jesus had scarcely landed, before cries for help rose, in different dialects, and in every form of appeal. "Rabbi, Rabboni," "Holy One of the Most High!" "Son of David!" "Son of God!" mingled one with the other. Jesus, however, waving them back with His hand, said, "Let me pass! to-night is not to be for the healing of your bodily troubles, but that you may hear the word of life, for the good of your souls." On hearing this they pressed towards Him,

that they might at least touch Him. When, at last, with the help of His disciples, He made His way to the palm, He motioned to the people to sit down on the grass. The knoll from which the palm rose was only a slight one, but when the crowd had sat down in rows, it sufficed to raise Him sufficiently above them. The men sat on the ground, leaving any better spots for the women and children.

It is a mistake to think of Jesus standing while He taught. He stood in the synagogue at Nazareth while the Prophets were being read, but He sat down to teach. He sat as He taught in the Temple, and when He addressed the multitude whom He had miraculously fed; and when He spoke from Simon Peter's boat, He did so sitting.

Under the palm lay a large stone, on which many had sat before, to enjoy the view over the Lake, or the shade of the branches above. The Rabbis often chose such open air spots for their addresses. There was nothing extraordinary, therefore, when Jesus sat down on it, and made it His pulpit. His dress was clean and carefully chosen, but simple. On His head, held in its place by a cord, He wore a white sudar, the ends of which hung down His shoulders. Over His tunic, which reached to the hands and feet, was a blue Tallith, with the prescribed tassels at the four corners, but only as large as Moses required. It was so thrown over Him, and so held together, that the grey red-striped under-garment was little seen, and His feet, which had sandals, not shoes, were only noticed occasionally, when He moved. When He had sat down and looked over the people, they became stiller and stiller, till nothing was heard but the soft plash of the ripple on the beach.

As He sat on the stone, Simon and Andrew, the sons of Jonas, stood on His right and left hand, with James and John, the sons of Zabdai. The people stood around the slope, for as yet Rabbis were heard, standing. "Sickness came into the world," says the Talmud, "when Rabban Gamaliel died, and it became the rule to hear the Law sitting."[39] "Sons of Israel, Men of Galilee," He began, "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come: repent, and believe the Gospel. Moses, your teacher, peace be to him, has said—

[39] Lightfoot, ii. 212.

'A prophet will the Lord your God raise unto you from your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear. But He who will not hear this prophet shall die!' Amen, I say unto you: He who believes on me has everlasting life. No man knows the Father but the Son, and no man knows the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Son reveals Him." Then, with a louder voice, He continued, "Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Then, drawing to a close, He added, "Take on you the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, for the kingdom of heaven is the fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets. Give up that which is worth little, that you may have what is of great price. Become wise changers who value holy money above all other, and the pearl of price above all.[h] He that has ears to bear, let him hear."[i]

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE BURSTING OF THE STORM.



THE summer passed in a succession of excitements and an unbroken recurrence of exhausting toil. Wherever Jesus appeared He was surrounded by crowds, anxious to see and to hear. The sick everywhere pressed in His way, and friends brought the bed-ridden and helpless to Him, from all quarters. From early morning till night, day by day, without respite, there was a strain on mind, heart, and body, alike. Even the retirement of the house in which He might be resting, could not save Him from intruding crowds, and time or free space for meals was hardly to be had. Such tension of His whole nature must have told on Him, and must have affected His whole nervous and physical system. To be continually surrounded by misery, in every form, is itself distressing; but, in addition to this, to be kept on the strain by the higher spiritual excitement of a great religious crisis, and to be overtaxed in mere physical demands, could not fail to show results, in careworn features, feverishness of the brain, and the need of temporary quiet and rest. Yet sympathy was felt for Him only by a few. The thoughtless crowds did not realize that they were consuming in the fires of its own devotion the nature they intended to honour, and His enemies, seeing everything only through the disturbing light of their hatred, invented a theory for it all that was sinister enough.

The continued and increasing support Jesus received from the people, was a daily growing evil in the eyes of the ecclesiastical authorities. They were in danger of losing their authority, which they identified with the interests of orthodoxy, and national favour with God. They had let

CHAP. XLI.

Him choose four or five disciples, without feeling alarmed, for a movement as yet so insignificant was almost beneath their notice. The choice of a publican as one of this handful had, indeed, apparently neutralized any possible danger, by the shock it gave to public feeling. The further choice of the Twelve was, however, more serious. It seemed like consolidation, and progress towards open schism. There were, already, parties in Judaism, but there were no sects, for all were alike fanatically loyal to the Law, the Temple, and the Scribes, and ready to unite against any one who was not as much so as themselves, in their own sense. Criticism was utterly proscribed: blind worship of things as they were was imperatively required, and, hence, Jesus, with His free examination of received opinions, provoked the bitterest hostility. As long, however, as He had no following He was little dreaded, but signs of organization and permanence, such as the choice of the Twelve, and the growing enthusiasm of the people towards Him, determined the authorities on vigorous action. Information was laid against Him at Jerusalem, where He had already been challenged, and Rabbis were sent down to investigate the whole question.

Every movement which did not rise in the Rabbinical schools was suspected by the Rabbis and their disciples, and there were circumstances in that of Jesus, which were especially formidable. The superhuman powers He displayed could not be questioned, and the Rabbis could boast of nothing so imposing. They were falling into the shade. Respect was growing for Jesus among the people, in spite of them.[1] His claims were daily urged more frankly, and the masses were disposed to assent to them. On His return to Capernaum He had cured a man who was blind, dumb, and mad, and possessed besides with a devil; and so astounding a miracle had raised the question, far and wide, whether, in spite of their former ideas, He were not the Son of David[a]—the Messiah,[2] after all. Men had, indeed, expected an outward political kingdom, with a blaze of miracle wrought on behalf of the nation at large, but they began to ask each other, "When the Christ cometh will He do more miracles than this man has done?"[3] It could not be endured. The

[1] Kiem, ii. 289.

[2] Herzog, ix. 432. Schürer, 582.

[3] John 7. 31.

movement of John had just been crushed, and, now, in restless Galilee, one far more dangerous to the Jerusalem authorities was rapidly taking shape and consistence. It must be put down at any cost.

The Rabbis from the capital, reverend and grey, did not know whether to be more bitter at the discredit thrown on their own claims to supernatural powers, or at the popular favour shown to Jesus. He cast out devils, indeed, but so did they, and their disciples,[4] the exorcists. It was enough for Him, however, to speak, and the sufferer was cured of all ailments alike, while they used adjurations, spells, and magic formulæ which were dangerously like the superstitions of the despised heathens. They laid stress on their knowledge of the secret names of God and the angels. To utter the cipher which stood for these, was, in their belief, to set in motion the divine and angelic powers themselves, and a whole science of the black art had been invented, defining how and for what ends they could be pressed into the service of their invoker, like the genii of the Arabian Nights into that of a magician.

The calm dignity and simplicity of Jesus, contrasted with their doubtful rites, was, indeed, humiliating to them. The mightiest of all agencies at their command was the unutterable name of "Jehovah"—called in the Book of Enoch, in the jargon of the Rabbinical exorcists—the oath Akâl and "the number of Kesbeel."[5] By this number, or oath, it was held, all that is has its being. It had also a secret magical power. It was made known to men by the wicked angels—"the sons of God"—who allied themselves with women, and brought on the flood.[6] "It was revealed by the Head of the Oath to the holy ones who dwell above in majesty; and his name is Beqa.[b] And he said to the holy Michael that he should reveal to them that secret name, that they might see it, and that they might use it for an oath, that they who reveal to the sons of men all that is hidden, may shrink away before that name and that oath. And this is the power of that oath, and these are its secret works, and these things were established by the swearing of it. The heaven was hung up for ever

[4] Matt. 12. 22—37. Mark 3. 19—30. Luke 11. 14, 15, 17—23.

[5] Or "Beka." Buch Henoch 12. 13. 15. 69.

[6] Gen. 6. 2.

CHAP. XLI.

and ever (by it), before the world was created. By it the earth was founded above the water, and the fair streams come by it for the use of the living, from the hidden places of the hills, from the foundation of the earth, for ever. And by that oath was the sea made, and underneath it he spread the sand, to restrain it in the time of its rage, and it dare not overstep this bound from the creation of the world to eternity. And through that oath the abysses are confirmed, and stand, and move not from their place, from eternity to eternity. And through that oath the sun and the moon fulfil their course, and turn not aside from the path assigned them, for ever and ever. And through that oath the stars fulfil their course, and he calls their names, and they answer, from eternity to eternity. And even so the spirits of the waters, of the winds, of all airs, and their ways, according to all the combinations of the spirits. And by that oath are the treasuries of the voice of the thunder and of the brightness of the lightning maintained, and the treasuries of the rain, and of the hoar frost, and of the clouds, and of the rain, and of the dew. And over them all this oath is mighty."[7]

Possessing spells so mighty as they believed the secret names of the higher powers thus to be, the Rabbis had created a vast science of magic, as fantastic as that of mediæval superstition, to bring these awful powers to bear on the mysteries of the future, and the diseases and troubles of the present. Combinations of numbers of lines, or of letters based on them, were believed to put them at the service of the seer, or the exorcist. Resistless talismans, protecting amulets, frightful curses, by which miracles could be wrought, the sick healed, and demons put to flight, were formed in this way. Armed with a mystic text from the opening of Genesis, or the visions of Ezekiel,[8] or the secret name of God, or of some of the angels, or with secret mysterious unions of letters, the Rabbis who dealt in the dark arts had the power to draw the moon from heaven, or to open the abysses of the earth![c] The uninitiated saw only unmeaning signs in their most awful formulæ, but he who could reckon their mystic value aright was master of angelic or even divine attributes.[9]

[7] Das Buch Henoch, 69. 12—25.

[8] Gfrörer, i. 60, 246.

[9] Hausrath, i. 108.

The appearance of Jesus as a miracle-worker so different from themselves, must have excited the Rabbinnical schools greatly. They made no little gain from their exorcisms, and now they were in danger of being wholly discredited.[10] At a loss what to do, they determined to slander what they could not deny, and attribute the miracles of Jesus to a league with the devil. They had, indeed, for some time back been whispering this insinuation about,[11] to poison the minds of the people against Him, as an emissary of Satan, and thus, necessarily, a disguised enemy of Israel, and of man. It would raise superstitious terror, if they could brand Him as a mere instrument of the kingdom of darkness.

[10] Schrader's Paulus, ii. 30. Acts 16. 16.

[11] Matt. 9. 34.

The cure of a man, blind, dumb, and possessed, was so astounding, that the Rabbis ventured to spread their malignant slanders more widely than heretofore. Jesus had retired to Peter's house, wearied and faint, after the miracle, but the multitude were so greatly excited that they crowded into the room, so that He could not even eat, and among them the Jerusalem Scribes, who were so bitter against Him, took care to find themselves. He read their faces, and knew their words. "This fellow, unauthorized and uneducated as He is, casts out devils, under Beelzebub, as their prince." They believed that the world of evil spirits, like that of the angels, formed a great army, in various divisions, each with its head and subordinates, its rank and file; the whole under the command of Satan. Beelzebub[12]—the "fifth god,"—was the name given by Jewish wit and contempt to Beelzebul,[d]—"the lord of the (royal) habitation"—a god of the Phenicians. To him was assigned the control of that division which inflicted disease of all kinds on man, and Jesus, they hinted, was playing a part under him, in pretending to drive out devils from the sick, that He might win the people to listen to His pestiferous teaching. They would not admit that His power was divine, and the ideas of the times necessarily assumed that it must be the opposite. It was of no avail that light streamed in on them; for bigotry, like the pupil of the eye, contracts in proportion to the outward brightness. He was, with them, an

[12] Buxtorf, 334, 389. Gfrörer i. 372. Lightfoot, ii. 203; iii. 114. Langen, 324. Herzog, i. 769. Derenbourg, 93. Tristram, 327.

CHAP. XLI.

emissary and champion of the kingdom of the devil, and an enemy of God.

They even went farther. Not only was He in league with the devil; He Himself was possessed with an unclean spirit,[13] and the demon in Him had turned His brain: "He had a devil, and was mad."[14] They had spread this far and wide, and yet, ventured, now, into His presence.

Jesus at once challenged them for their slanders, and brought them, in the presence of the multitude, to an account. "His whole life was before the world. The aim and spirit of it were transparent. Was it not expressly to fight against the evil and confused spirit of the day; to overthrow all wickedness and all evil; to restore moral and spiritual soundness in the people; did He not strive after all this, with the fulness of His power? Who could deny that He only sought good, and spent all His energy to advance it? And could He league Himself with the prince of darkness to do good? What a ridiculous, self-contradictory charge! To think of Him overcoming evil by evil; fighting against the kingdom of darkness, with the weapons of darkness, was almost too foolish to repeat! No kingdom is in conflict with itself, or if there be division in it, it is already in process of dissolution, for it needs nothing more to bring it quickly to ruin."[e] There was no answering such an argument. But Jesus had still more to say.

"If I," said He, "cast out devils by the power of Beelzebub, by whom do your disciples cast them out?[15] You do not attribute their works to the prince of devils, why do you do so with mine? But if I do these things by the power of God, I prove myself to be sent from Him, and to be His Messiah, and where the Messiah is, there also is His Kingdom.[16] Do you still hesitate to draw this conclusion? Ask yourselves, then, how I can invade the kingdom of Satan, and take from him his servants, instruments, and victims, the sick, and the possessed, without having first overcome himself? The strong man's palace can only be spoiled when he, himself, is first bound. It is no light matter to put yourselves in the position you take towards me. He who is not with me, is, as may be seen in your case, my enemy. No

[13] Mark 3. 30.

[14] John 10. 20.

[15] Derenbourg, 106. Melvill's Sermons, i. 219.

[16] Weidemann, Darstellungen, 99.

neutrality between the Messiah and the devil is possible. If you do not help, with me, to gather in the harvest, you scatter it, and hinder its being gathered!"[17]



[17] Ullmann, 225. Schleiermacher's Predigten, iii 661.

The arguments of Jesus were so irresistible that the Rabbis, taken in the snares they had set for Him, could say nothing, and, now, while they were silenced before the people they had striven to pervert, He advanced from defence to attack. They claimed to be the righteous of the land, but had no idea of what true righteousness meant. Jesus had come to offer forgiveness to sinners, not to judge them. He desired rather to deliver them from their guilt. But He saw that His enemies, the theologians and clergy of the day, and the privileged classes generally, had determined to reject Him whatever proofs of His divine mission He might advance. Their prejudices and self-interest had blinded them till their religious faculty was destroyed. They had deliberately refused to be convinced, and conscience grows dead if its convictions are slighted. The heart gets incapable of seeing the truth against which it has closed itself. They dared to speak of the Holy Spirit of God who inspired the New Kingdom, and in whose fulness Jesus wrestled against selfishness and ambition, soothed the woes of the people, opened a pure and heavenly future, and sought to win men to eternal life, as a spirit of evil. Light was to them darkness, and darkness light. They even sought to quench the light in its source by plotting against His life. This, He told them, was blasphemy against the Divine Spirit. They had wilfully rejected the clear revelation of His presence and power, and had shown deliberate and conscious enmity against Him. "This awful sin," said He, "cannot be forgiven, because, when it occurs, the religious faculty has been voluntarily destroyed, and wilful, declared opposition to heavenly truth has possessed the soul as with a devil." "To speak against me as a man," He continued, "and not recognize me as the Messiah, is not a hopeless sin, for better knowledge, a change of heart, and faith, may come, and I may be acknowledged. But it is different when the truth itself is blasphemed; when the Holy Spirit, by whom alone the heart can be changed, is contemned as evil.[18] The soul

[18] Keim, ii. 312. Schenkel, 106. Herzog, v. 283.

CHAP. XLI.

has then shut out the light, and has chosen darkness as its portion.[f]

"I warn you to beware of speaking thus any longer. Either decide that the tree is good and its fruit consequently good, or that it is bad and its fruit bad, but do not act so foolishly as you have done in your judgment on me, by calling the tree bad—that is, calling me a tool of the devil, and yet ascribing good fruit to me—such, I mean, as the casting out devils. Do not think what you say is mere words, for words rise from the heart, as if from the root of the man: as the tree and the stem, such is the fruit. See that you do your duty by yourselves, that the tree of your own spiritual being be good and bear good fruit. The tree is known by its fruits. It is no wonder you blaspheme as you have done; a generation of vipers, your hearts are evil, and you are morally incapable of acknowledging the truth, for the lips speak as the heart feels. Witness to the truth flows from the lips of the good; such language as yours, from the lips of the evil. But, beware, for I tell you that, as such words are the utterance of the heart, and show how you are affected towards God and His Spirit, you will have to give account of them when I come as the Messiah, to judgment. Your words respecting me and my Kingdom will then justify or condemn you."[19]

At this point, as was common in the most solemn Jewish assemblies, He was interrupted by some of the Rabbis present. They demanded in strange contradiction to the theory that He was a secret agent of Beelzebub, some astounding miracle, as a sign from heaven in support of His claims as the Messiah: as hereafter they did, in every part of the world, from the Apostles.[20] The masses, and even their leaders, expected the repetition of all the great deeds of Moses and Joshua, to inaugurate the coming of the Messiah, and other claimants did not venture to resist the demand. Under the Procurator Fadus, a certain Theudas drew out the people to the Jordan to see Israel walk through, once more, on dry ground.[21] Under Felix, a prophet promised to throw down the walls of Jerusalem, as Joshua did those of Jericho, and gathered thirty thousand men on the Mount of Olives to see

[19] Schleiermacher's Predigten, iii. 712.

[20] 1 Cor. i. 22.

[21] Ant. xx. 5. 1.

them fall.[22] Others invited the nation to follow them into the wilderness, where they promised to show them stupendous signs of the kingdom of God having come.[23] It might have seemed a temptation to One possessing supernatural power, to silence all cavil by a miracle of irresistible grandeur. But outward acknowledgment of His claims was of no worth in a kingdom like that of Christ's, resting on love, and homage to holiness. He cared nothing for popularity or fame, and lived in unbroken self-restraint, using His mighty power only to further spiritual ends. It was easy, therefore, to repel the seduction, which He had already overcome in His first great wilderness struggle. "An evil and adulterous generation," said He—"unfaithful to God, who chose Israel for His bride—asks for a sign, grand beyond all I have given, that I am the Messiah." Then, predicting His violent death, He went on—"There shall be no sign given it, but that of the prophet Jonah. For, as he was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the kingdom of the dead."[g] The spiritual miracle of His life and words were the only signs He could vouchsafe while He lived, for at no time did He lay stress on miracles alone as a means of gaining disciples, but subordinated them to His proclamation of the Truth.[h] His preaching would itself be a sign like that of the preaching of Jonah to the Ninevites.[24] "The men of that city," said He, "would rise in the judgment day, to witness against this generation, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and *He* was greater than that prophet. The Queen of the South, who came from Sheba to hear the wisdom of Solomon, would then condemn them, for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth, and great as they thought the glory of Solomon,[i] they had one greater than he before them, in Himself. Vast multitudes had gone out to hear John, and had professed repentance; vast multitudes had followed Himself, and, yet, the result had been only temporary and superficial. It would prove with this generation as with a man from whom an unclean spirit has for a time gone out. Meeting no suiting rest elsewhere, it returns, and finding its former dwelling in the

[22] Bell. Jud. i. 13. 5.
[23] Bell. Jud. i. 13. 4.
[24] Schenkel, 134. Keim, ii. 434. Matt. 12. 38—45. Luke 11. 24—26, 29—32.

CHAP. XLI.

man's soul ready for it, it allies itself with seven demons still worse than itself, and with their help enters the man once more. The Reformation under John, and under Himself, was only temporary; the nation would fall back again to its old sinful ways, and become worse than ever."[25] He foresaw His rejection, and thus foretold it.

[25] Hausrath, i. 378. Keim, ii. 433.

He had silenced the Rabbis, and no doubt by doing so had intensified their hatred; but a new trial awaited Him. The insinuation that His brain was affected had reached His family, who still lived at Nazareth. The effects of the exhausting toil, and constant excitement of these months, had, apparently, led even His friends to fear that He would give way under such tension, and, now, the hints of the Rabbis that He was possessed, and spoke and acted as He did, under demoniacal influence, raised the fear that judicial action would be begun against Him, on the part of the Jerusalem authorities.[26] Very possibly the simple household at Nazareth, who, like other Jews, must have looked on the Rabbis with superstitious reverence, and have shrunk from questioning anything they said, had innocently accepted the insinuation, that He was really out of His mind, as a result of being possessed. Prejudiced in favour of the common idea of the Messiah as a national hero, at the head of Jewish armies, they had not risen to any higher conception, and felt impelled by every motive to interfere, and, if possible, put a stop to what seemed to them an unaccountable course of action on His part. It was only about ten hours' distance from Nazareth to Capernaum, over the hills; they would go and see for themselves; and so, Mary, and the brothers and sisters of Jesus—the whole household, for Joseph was dead—set out for Peter's house.

[26] Lightfoot, ii. 205.

They arrived while the crowd, excited by the miracle they had just seen, and half believing that Jesus must be the expected Messiah, still filled the house and thronged the courtyard, so that the Rabbis, overawed, could do nothing against Him. Anxious to withdraw Him from His dangerous course, and unable as yet to understand Him, they had come to the conclusion, perhaps at the instigation of the Rabbis, that the best plan would be to lay hold on Him, and take

Him home by force, as one beside Himself. If they could keep Him for a time at Nazareth; if necessary, under restraint; the quiet, they hoped, would calm His mind and free Him from His hallucinations. It is wonderful that they could argue with themselves in such a way—especially that Mary could have fancied it madness that He acted as He did and called Himself the Messiah; but vision, in spiritual things as in nature, depends, not on the flood of light around us, but on the eye on which it falls.

On coming near, however, they found they could not make their way through the crowd, and had to request those near to let Him know their presence, and that they wished to speak with Him. At any moment when busy with the work of the Kingdom, all lower relations, bonds, and cares, of His earlier life, ceased to engage Him, but much more was it so at a time like this, when engrossed with its supreme interests, and with the victory over its enemies which He had hardly as yet completed. The most sacred of earthly ties lost its greatness before the grandeur of spiritual kinship in the new deathless communion He was founding. "Who is my mother?" asked He, "and who are my brethren?" Then, stretching His hands towards those around Him—"Behold," said He, "my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father in Heaven,[27] the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."[28] It was the same answer, in effect, as He had, perhaps before this, given, when a woman in the crowd, unable to restrain herself, had expressed aloud her sense of the surpassing honour of her who had borne and nursed Him. "Yea, rather," replied He, "blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it."

[27] Ullmann, 50.

[28] Ewald, v. 413. Matt. 12. 46—50. Mark 3. 31—35. Luke 8. 19—21; 11. 27, 28.

It was from no want of tenderness Jesus thus spoke. A holy duty to Himself, His honour, and His calling, demanded His acting as He did. It was imperative that He should keep Himself from the hands even of His nearest friends, to prevent their unconsciously carrying out the plans of His enemies, by violently restraining Him. He had, moreover, founded a new family of which He was the Spiritual Head, and this, henceforth, as it spread among men, was to be His supreme earthly relationship. The ready faith of the

CHAP. XLI

Samaritans, and the surpassing example of the heathen centurion, had foreshadowed the extension of the New Kingdom, beyond Israel, to all nations. To do the will of mere men, whether priests, or Rabbis, was no longer the condition of heavenly favour. Henceforth, over the earth, to do the will of God was the one condition required to open the gates of the way of life.

Foiled in their attempt to brand Jesus publicly as in league with the devil, the Pharisees[k] resolved to try the subtler plan of pretending friendliness, and inviting Him to partake of their hospitality, that they might watch what He said, and, if possible, provoke Him to commit Himself in some way that would bring Him within the reach of the Law. It was yet early, and one of them asked Him, with this treacherous object, to join the light morning meal, then lately introduced into Palestine by the Romans.[l] He accepted the invitation, with a full knowledge of the spirit in which it had been given. It had been expected, perhaps, that the honour of entertainment in a circle of Rabbis, would awe a layman of humble standing like Jesus, but He took care to show His true bearing towards them from the moment He reclined at table. Washing the hands before eating was, in all cases, a vital requirement of Pharisaic duty. A Rabbi would rather have suffered death than eat before he had done so. "It is better," said Rabbi Akiba, "in a time of persecution, to die of thirst than to break the commandment, and thus die eternally," and proceeded to wash his hands before touching food, with the allowance of drinking water brought him by his jailor.[29] But observance of Pharisaic rules required much more. Christ had just come from among a crowd, and had, besides, cast out a devil, and thus doubly defiled, ought to have purified Himself by a bath, before coming to table with those who were Levitically clean. A Pharisee always bathed himself before eating, on coming from the market-place,[30] to wash away the defilement of contact with the unclean multitude, and it was to be expected that Jesus would have been equally scrupulous.[m] He had committed Himself, however, to uncompromising opposition to a system which substituted forms for true

[29] Erubin, fol. 21. 2.

[30] Mark 7. 4. Nork, 140. Godwyn, 88. Hausrath, i. 88.

spiritual religion, and took His place on the couch without any ceremonial purification. The host and his guests were astonished, and betrayed, at least in their looks, their real feelings towards Him; bitter enough before, but now fiercer than ever, at this defiant affront to their cherished usages.

Roused by their uncourteous hostility, He instantly took His position of calm independence and superiority, for He feared no human face, nor any combination of human violence. Knowing perfectly that He was alone against the world, He felt that the Truth required Him to witness for it, come what might to Himself.

"I see," said He, "what you are thinking. You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the platter,[31] but you fill both, within, with the gains of hypocritical robbery and wickedness; you cleanse the outside of a cup, and think nothing of your own souls being full of all evil.[n] Fools! did not He who made the outside of a cup make the inside as well? As He made all outward and visible things, has He not also made all inward and spiritual? How absurd to take so much care of the one, and to neglect the other! Let me tell you how you may attain true purification. Give with willing, loving hearts, what you have in your cups and platters, as alms, and this will make all your ceremonial washings of the outside superfluous, and cleanse both the vessels and your hearts. The Rabbis have told you that 'charity is worth all other virtues together,'[32] but your covetousness is a proverb, for you devour widows' houses, and have invented excuses for a son robbing even his father for your good.[33] But woe to you, Pharisees! for it is vain to expect this of you, who know nothing of true love. You lay stress on external trifles, and neglect the principles and duties of the inner life—you tithe petty garden herbs, like mint, and rue, and all kinds besides, and are indifferent to right and wrong, and to the love of God. If you wish to tithe the garden herbs,[34] it is well to do so, but you should be as zealous for what is much more important.[o] Your vanity is as great as your grasping hypocrisy! Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues, and

[31] Luke 11. 37—54.

[32] Bava Bathra, 9. 1.

[33] Matt. 23. 14. Mark 7. 11. Nork, 141.

[34] Tristram, 419, 471, 478.

CHAP. XLI.

to be flattered by men rising up as you pass in the crowded market-place, and greeting you with reverend salutations of 'Rabbi, Rabbi, your reverence, your reverence.'[35] Woe unto you! you are like graves sunk in the earth, over which men walk, thinking the ground clean, and are defiled when they least suspect it.[p] Men think themselves with saints if in your company, but to be near you is to be near pollution!"

Schürer. 443.

A Rabbi[q] among the guests here interrupted Him. "Teacher," said he, "you are condemning not only the common lay Pharisees, but us, the Rabbis." The interruption only directed Jesus against the "lawyers" specially. "Woe to you, lawyers, also!" said He, "for ye burden men with burdens grievous to be borne, while ye, yourselves, touch not these burdens with one of your fingers to help the shoulders to bear them. Ye sit in your chambers and schools, and create legal rules, endless, harassing, intolerable, for the people, but not affecting yourselves,—shut out as you are from busy life. Woe unto you! for ye build the tombs of the prophets, but your fathers, in whose acts you glory, killed them. Shame for their having done so might make you wish those sacred tombs forgotten; but you have no shame, and rebuild these tombs to win favour with the people, while in your hearts you are ready to repeat to the prophets of to-day the deeds of your fathers towards those of old! Your pretended reverence for these martyrs, shown in restoring their sepulchres, while you are ready to repeat the wickedness of their murderers, makes these tombs a witness against you. The Holy Spirit had this in view, when He said by Me, sometime since,[r] 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will persecute and kill; that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation—from the blood of Abel to that of Zachariah, who perished between the altar and the Temple.' Yes, I say unto you, it will be required of this generation. Under the guidance of you lawyers it was, that the people treated them as they did! Woe to you! you have taken away from the nation the key to the temple of heavenly knowledge—have

made them incapable of recognizing the truth,—by your teaching. You, yourselves, have not entered, and you have hindered those from entering who were on the point of doing so!"

The die was finally cast. Henceforth Jesus stood consciously alone, the rejected of the leaders of His nation. There was before Him only a weary path of persecution, and, at its end, the Cross. An incident, recorded by St. Luke, seems to belong to this period. The multitudes thronging to hear the new teaching were daily greater, in spite of the hostility of the Rabbis, for their calumnies and insinuations had not yet abated the general excitement. "An innumerable multitude" waited for the reappearance of Jesus, and hung on His lips to catch every word. He might be attacked and slandered in the house of the Pharisee, but, as yet, the crowd looked on Him with astonishment and respect. Opinions differed only as to the scope of His action: that He was a great Rabbi, was felt by all.

It was the custom to refer questions of all kinds to the Rabbis for their counsel and decision, which carried great weight, though it might be informal and extra-judicial. Their words were virtually law, for to dispute or oppose them was well-nigh criminal.[36] To get the support of one so great as Jesus, therefore, in any matter, would, as it seemed, decide a point at once in his favour whom He supported.

[36] Eisenmenger, i. 331, 332.

One of the crowd, reasoning thus, chose an opportunity to solicit His weighty interference in a question of inheritance,[37] in which there was a strife with a brother. "Teacher," said he, "speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." But he had utterly misconceived Christ's spirit and sphere. In the briefest and most direct words, the idea that He had anything to do with "judging" or "dividing" in worldly affairs was repudiated. It was not His province.

[37] Luke 12. 13 ff

The question, however, gave an occasion for solemn warning against the unworthy greed and selfishness which lie at the root of all such strife, on one side or the other. Addressing the crowd, who had heard the request, He gave them a caution against all forms of covetousness, or

excessive desire of worldly possessions, in the following parable.

"Watch," said He, "and keep yourselves from all covetousness. For, though a man may abound in riches, his life does not depend on his wealth, but on the will of God, who can lengthen or shorten his existence, and make it happy or sad, at His pleasure. Let me show you what I mean.

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he reasoned within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, because I have no room to stow away my crops?' And he said, 'This will I do. I will pull down my barns and build greater, and I will gather together into them all my crops and my property, and will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much property laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

"But God said unto him, 'Fool, this night thy soul is required of thee, and whose will those things be which thou hast prepared?'

"So," added Jesus, "is he who heaps up treasures for himself, and is not rich towards God. Death, coming unexpectedly, and, at latest, soon strips him of all, if he has only thought of himself and of this world. The true wisdom is to use what we have so as to lay up treasures, by its right employment, in heaven, that God may give us these, after death, in the kingdom of the Messiah."

# CHAPTER XLII.

## AFTER THE STORM.

THE meal in the house of the Pharisee was a turning point in the life of Jesus. The fierceness of His enemies had broken out into open rage, so that, as He left, He was followed by the infuriated Rabbis, gesticulating,[1] as they pressed round Him, and provoking Him to commit Himself by words of which they might lay hold. A vast crowd had meanwhile gathered,[2] partly on His side, partly turned against Him by the arts of His accusers. The excitement had reached its highest.

CHAP. XLII.

[1] Luke 11. 53.

[2] Luke 12. 1.

With such a multitude before Him, it was certain that He would not let the opportunity pass of proclaiming afresh the New Kingdom of God. It had been called a kingdom of the devil, and it was meet that He should turn aside the calumny. His past mode of teaching did not, however, seem suited for the new circumstances. It had left but small permanent results; and a new and still simpler style of instruction, specially adapted to their dulness and untrained minds and hearts, would at least arrest their attention more surely, and force them to a measure of reflection. Pressing through the vast throng, to the shore of the Lake, He entered a fishing-boat, and, sitting down at its prow, the highest part of it, began, from this convenient pulpit, as it lightly rocked on the waters, the first of those wondrous parables, in which He henceforth so frequently embodied His teachings.

The Parable or Mashal was a mode of instruction already familiar to Israel since the days of the Judges,[3] and was in familiar and constant use among the Rabbis. Its characteristic is the presentation of moral and religious truth in a more

[3] Judges 9. 7. Isaiah 5. 1. Ezek 13.11,&c.

CHAP. XLII.

vivid *form than* is possible by mere precept, or abstract statement, use being made for this end of some incident drawn from life or nature, by which the lesson sought to be given is pictured to the eye, and thus imprinted on the memory, and made more emphatic. Analogies hitherto unsuspected between familiar natural facts and spiritual phenomena; lessons of duty enforced by some simple imaginary narrative or incident; striking parallels and comparisons, which made the homeliest trifles symbols of the highest truths, abound in all the discourses of Jesus, but are still more frequent from this time. Nothing was henceforth left unused. The light, the darkness, the houses around, the games of childhood, the sightless wayside beggar, the foxes of the hills, the leathern bottles hung up from every rafter, the patched or new garment, and even the noisy hen amidst her chickens, served, in turn, to illustrate some lofty truth. The sower on the hill-side at hand, the flaming weeds among the corn, the common mustard plant, the leaven in the woman's dough, the treasure disclosed by the passing ploughshare, the pearl brought by the travelling merchant from distant lands for sale at Bethsaida or Tiberias,—at Philip's court or that of Antipas,—the draw-net seen daily on the Lake, the pitiless servant, the labourers in the vineyards around—any detail of every-day life—was elevated, as occasion demanded, to be the vehicle of the sublimest lessons. Others have uttered parables; but Jesus so far transcends them, that He may justly be called the creator of this mode of instruction.[4]

[4] Renan's Vie de Jésus, 167. Keim, ii. 438.

Matt. 13. 1—23. Mark 4. 1—25. Luke 8. 4—18.

The first of the wondrous series was, fitly, that of the Sower, for the planting of the New Kingdom must needs be the first stage towards further truths respecting it. In a country like Galilee no illustration could be more easily intelligible, and it is no wonder that Jesus often uses it. As He sat in the boat, with the multitude standing on the shore, each feature of the parable would be before Him,—the sower going out from the neighbouring town or village to sow his patch on the unenclosed hill-side, with its varied soil; here warm and deep; there a mere skin over the limestone rock; invaded at some spots by thorns, then, as now, so

plentiful in Palestine, and crossed by the bridle path, along which men and beasts were passing constantly. The seed was good, and the sower faithfully did his work, but it depended on the soil itself, what would be the result, for the rain, and the light, and the heat, came equally on all. Part fell on the trodden path,—which, itself, though now beaten hard, was once as soft and yielding as any part of the field,—and was crushed under foot, or picked up by the birds hovering near. Some fell on spots in which the springing thistles had already taken root, and were about to shoot up in rank vigour; some on the shallow skin of earth over the rock, where the hot sun hastened the growth, while the hard rock hindered the root from striking down; and only a part fell on good soil, and yielded a return for the sower's toil.[a]

This parable, apparently so self-illustrative, only troubled the minds of the Twelve, and of the wider circle in His hearers who had any interest in His words.[5] The mode of teaching was new to them from Jesus,[6] and the conceptions embodied in what they had heard were directly opposite to all they had been accustomed, as Jews, to associate with the Messianic kingdom. The careless multitude, drawn together only by curiosity, had scattered when Jesus had finished His address, and He had returned to Peter's house. Thither, however, a number of graver spirits followed, with the Twelve, to seek the explanation they felt assured would be vouchsafed. It was, indeed, precisely what Jesus desired, for it afforded an opportunity for the fuller instruction of all whose state of heart fitted them to receive it, and it drew them into closer personal intercourse with Him. He received them with frank delight. "Unto you, who thus show your interest in the mysteries of the kingdom of God," said He, "it is given to know them, but to the indifferent outside multitude,[7] they are designedly left veiled in parable." To understand spiritual truth, the heart must be in sympathy with it; otherwise, to try to explain it, would be as idle as to speak of colours to the blind, or of music to the deaf. When the religious faculty was dead or dormant, religious truth was necessarily incomprehensible and undesired. "He came to be a Light to men,[8] and to reveal the truth, not to hide it, but men must

[5] Mark 4. 12.
[6] Mark 4. 33, 34; Matt. 13. 34; 10. 13.
[7] Mark 4. 11
[8] Mark 4. 21.

CHAP. XLII.

[9] Mark 4. 23.
[10] Mark 4. 24.

have willing ears,[9] and take heed to what they hear,[10] pondering over it in their hearts. To listen only with the outward ear, like the careless multitude, is to draw down the punishment of God. In natures thus wilfully indifferent, hardness only grows the worse the more they hear. To such, the very word of life becomes a word of death. Rejecting me, the Light, they are given up by God to the darkness they have chosen, and lose, erelong, even the superficial interest in higher things they may have had.

"Ye, on the other hand," He continued, "who really have received the truth into a willing heart, have thereby proved your fitness for higher disclosures, and shall have them.[11] The honest interest you show determines the measure of knowledge you are able to receive, and it will be given you.[b] He who has opened his soul to me will receive continually richer insight into the truth. Alas for those who shut their eyes and stop their ears! But blessed are your eyes, into which you have let the truth enter, and blessed are your ears, into which you have let it sink. Amen! I say to you, Many prophets and righteous men longed to see those things which ye see, and did not see them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and did not hear them."[12]

[11] Mark 4. 24.

[12] Matt. 13. 16, 17

Such, in brief explanatory paraphrase, was the welcome to those really anxious to understand the parable, which Jesus forthwith expounded to them, disclosing, as He did so, conceptions and principles which required a complete revolution in their minds to understand and appropriate. He announced that the ancient kingdom of God was, henceforth, spiritualized, so that the only relation of man to it, from this time, was a moral one; not, as heretofore, in part, a political. So entirely, indeed, was this the case, that He did not even speak of the external agencies or organization by which men should be outwardly received as its citizens, but assumed that acceptance depended on the man himself; on his will and his sympathy with what the New Kingdom offered. "The Word is the only Seed of the Gospel. As the embodiment of all truth, it is by following it that the Will of God is realized by men, and the one grand law of the kingdom thus obeyed. It is given to men, as the seed to the ground, and they can

hear and understand it if they choose, but all depends on their doing so. As the strewn seed neither springs nor bears fruit on much of the ground, and fails except where it sinks into good soil, so the relations of men to the Word of God are very various. Few, it may be, receive it aright, but it is always the fault of men themselves if it be not living seed in their hearts. Worldly indifference may have made the soil impenetrable as the trodden path, or have left only a skin of sentiment over hidden callousness; or worldly cares or pleasures may be let spring up, and choke the better growth; in all cases it is the man, not the seed or the sower, on whom the result turns. Before all things, this is to be felt, so that no one may imagine that entrance into the New Kingdom depends on any but moral conditions. Every merely outward claim to citizenship must be laid aside; it is a matter strictly between God and the soul. The more completely this is done, the greater the fitness for entrance. He must be willing simply to receive, without a thought of merit, or right, what God is pleased to give of His free bounty. The New Kingdom is, in truth, altogether spiritual. It works directly on the soul, by spiritual truth. It advances in the individual and the world, not by outward power, or political glory, or by miracles, but by the Word sown in the heart, and its aim, like its nature, is spiritual; to make the heart and life visibly fruitful in all heavenly grace."[13]

As the parable of the Sower described the planting of the New Kingdom in the heart, others set forth the secret invisible energy of the Word, by the indestructible vigour of which the New Kingdom unfolds itself in the individual and in the world. It was compared to the silent and mysterious growth of seed, which springs up by unperceived development, first into the blade, then into the ear, and, finally, into the ripened corn. The triumphant future found an analogy in the growth of a grain of mustard-seed—which, though among the smallest, grows to be the greatest amongst herbs, shooting out wide branches, and becoming a tree, in the shade of which the birds of the air come and lodge. It found another in the silent leavening of three measures of meal by a spot of yeast, hidden in them. As surely as

[13] Baur, Geschichte, 33. Keim, ii. 448. Hausrath, i. 361. DeWette and Meyer, *in loc.* Schleiermacher's Predigten. iv. 707, 721, 739, 755. Jacox Sec. Annot., 1st series, 386. Schenkel, 116. Land and Book, 82. Furrer, Palästina, 18. Robertson's Sermons, 1st series, 16. Matt. 13. 24—33. Mark 4. 26—34.

CHAP. XLII.

the seed will spring, or the mustard-seed become a tree,[c] or the yeast spread through all the three measures of meal,—as certainly as the spark spreads to a flame,—the New Kingdom will grow and expand to world-wide glory. It needs no battles to be won, as the hearers fancied it did; no violent revolutions. Jesus knew that the living force of truth in each single heart must spread, and that, as soul after soul was won, it would silently revolutionize the world, and leaven all humanity.

That there should be hindrances was only natural, and these He shadowed out in the parable of the Tares secretly sown by an enemy in a man's field, and undistinguishable from the grain till both had come to fruit.[14] For the sake of the wheat both were left by the householder, till the harvest, but, in the end, the tares would be gathered for burning, and the wheat for the barn.[d] The full meaning of this parable was given afterwards by Jesus Himself. The visible Church would include in it, till the last day, many who were not true members. To separate them is not the part of man, but of the Judge. But this is, and could be, meant only in a general sense, for the whole spirit of the Gospels implies the rejection of the openly unworthy, and their reception again on their repentance. "Those who to-day are thorns," says Augustine, "may be wheat to-morrow."

[14] Ullmann, 256. Matt.13.36—43, 44—53.

"So," said He, also, "my kingdom may be likened to a net cast into the lake; which gathers in it good fish and bad, and, when full, is drawn to shore, and the good gathered into vessels while the bad are cast away."[e]

The supreme worth of citizenship in His kingdom He set forth in separate parables. It was like a treasure hid in a field,[f] which, when found, so filled the heart of the discoverer, that, for joy, he went away, and sold all he had, and bought the field, that the treasure might be his. Or, it was like a priceless pearl met with by a merchant seeking such a treasure, and secured by him at the cost of all he had. The kingdom might be found by some without their seeking it, as the treasure by the peasant in the field; or it might be met by one in earnest search for it, like him who

found the costly pearl. In either case, it could only be obtained by joyful self-sacrifice of all things else for its sake, and by the realization of the worthlessness of all human possessions in comparison with it.

It is not certain that all these parables were spoken the same day, though there is nothing improbable in the supposition that Jesus should have given such a free utterance to the wealth of imagery and illustration which flowed from His lips with no mental effort. But the evening came at last, and found Him wearied out with the work and agitations of such an eventful day. Capernaum could, however, no longer be the quiet home for Him that it had been. The fierce rage of the priests and schoolmen in the morning, and their intrigue with the household of Nazareth to lay hold on Him as a madman, possessed with a devil, showed that they would stop at no wickedness to get Him into their power. The controversy respecting Him had penetrated every humble cottage, and quiet work was no longer possible. Moreover, it was necessary to introduce His disciples to a wider sphere of life and work than Capernaum and the little districts round it, in preparation for their independent action, and to form and strengthen their character and power of self-reliance by putting it to the proof, and revealing to them the weaknesses yet to be overcome.

The wall of lonely hills on the east side of the Lake, seamed by deep gorges through which the path led to the vast upland plains of the eastern Jordan—a region little known to the busy population of Galilee, and in bad reputation with most, as more heathen than Jewish—offered Him a secure retreat. Instead of returning to Peter's house, where new troubles might have awaited Him, He ordered His disciples to carry Him to the opposite shore, that He might escape from all painful scenes, and enjoy peace and rest for a time. His enemies would not be likely to seek a Rabbi like Him in such an unclean district; least of all, in the neighbourhood He first visited—that of the heathen city, Gadara.

But the incidents of the day were not yet over. The streets on the way to the boat were full with the evening

CHAP. XLII.

gossips, glad to talk with their neighbours in the gathering twilight, now their day's work was done; and, with others lingering about, in the hope of seeing the great Rabbi. A number of these soon gathered round Christ and His disciples as they made towards the shore, and at last the silence was broken by one of them, strange to say, himself a Rabbi, offering to follow Him as His scholar. "Teacher,"[15] said he, "I will follow Thee wherever you go."[g] It might have seemed a great thing for one in the position of Jesus to have a Rabbi among His disciples, but He never courted human aid, or acted on mere expediency. The highest, no less than the humblest, could only be received on the condition of absolute self-sacrifice and sincerity. Nor did He readily accept those who offered themselves, but chose rather to summon such as He wished, to His immediate circle. "Ye have not chosen me," said He, on a future occasion, "but I have chosen you."[16] He returned, therefore, only an answer which should test the applicant's motives to the uttermost. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Virtually driven from the one dwelling at Capernaum He could regard as His home, and rejected from Nazareth, He was, henceforth, a wanderer, with no fixed dwelling. From this time He was almost a fugitive from His enemies, never remaining long in any one place,—a homeless and houseless man.

To a second applicant, who professed himself willing to follow Him as soon as he had discharged the pious duty of burying his father, the startling answer was returned, "Let the (spiritually) dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."[17] Under other circumstances Christ would have commended such filial love; but it was necessary now, to show, by a supreme example, that those who sought to follow Him must deny natural feelings, other wise entirely sacred, when the interests of the kingdom of God required it.[18] He had in mind, doubtless, the thirty days' mourning[19] that were virtually implied, and knew the results of indecision in a matter so paramount. It was, moreover, a requirement of the Rabbis, in similar cases, that if any

[15] Teacher (διδάσκαλος) is the equivalent of Rabbi.

[g] Matt. 7. 18—27. Mark 4. 35—41. Luke 8. 22—25.

[16] John 15. 16.

[17] Luke 9. 60.

[18] Ullmann, 143.

[19] Hor. Heb. ii. 173.

one who wished to be a scholar of the Law, had to choose between burying even his nearest relation—his parent, or his brother, or sister—and devoting himself at once to his sacred duties, he should leave the burial to others, as the less important duty, and give himself up on the moment, undividedly to the other.[20] The words of Jesus were the familiar and well-known expression of this recognized condition of even Rabbinical discipleship. The applicant would have had to act thus had he chosen to follow a Rabbi, and less devotion and sincerity could not be demanded in the service of the New Kingdom.[h]

20 Megilla, fol. 3, col. 2.

A third, who asked leave before finally following Christ, to go home and bid his family circle farewell, received a similar answer—" No one having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God; he who gives himself up to the kingdom of God, must do so with an undivided heart, suffering no earthly cares to distract him."

He had set out for the Lake side as soon as the multitudes had scattered sufficiently to open the way; and now, having reached it, He went into a fishing-boat, just as He was,[21] and they pushed off in company with some other boats. It was already late for Orientals to be abroad, and the rest in the open air, after such continuous mental and bodily excitement, soon brought the sweet relief of deep refreshing sleep. We never hear of Jesus being ill; and, indeed, such a life as His, utterly free from all disturbing causes which might induce disease, may well have been exceptionally healthy. The coarse leather boss of the steersman's seat, at the end of the boat, sufficed for a pillow,[i] and presently He forgot in deep slumber the cares and labours of the day.

21 Matt. 8. 23—9. 1. Mark 4. 36—5. 21. Luke 8. 23—40

The sail across, however, though usually so refreshing and delightful, was destined to be rudely disturbed. The Lake lies in its deep bed among the hills, ordinarily smooth as a mirror, but sudden storms at times rush down every wady on the north-east and east, and lash the waters into furious roughness. The winds sweeping over the vast bare table-land of Gaulonitis and the Hauran, and the boundless desert beyond, pour down the deep ravines and gorges, cut in the

CHAP. XLII.

course of ages by streams and torrents, on their way to the Lake, and lash it into incredible commotion. Its position, about six hundred feet below the Mediterranean, induces such sudden hurricanes, by heating the air over it till the colder atmosphere of the hills rushes down to fill the vacuum caused by the rarefaction.[22]

[22] Winer, Wind. Thomson, Land and Book, 374, 392.

Such a storm now burst on the calm bosom of the waters, and presently raised the waves to such a height, that the unprotected boat was all but swamped. In the wild roaring of the wind; amidst blinding torrents of rain, and the thick darkness of the hurricane cloud, which blotted out the stars; and the dashing of the sea, which broke over them[k] each moment; even bronzed sailors like the Twelve lost their presence of mind, and were filled with dismay. Driven before the wind, they were fast filling, and, as it seemed, must presently go down. Through all the wild tumult of wind, darkness, rain, and sea, however, Jesus lay peacefully asleep, so profoundly had He been exhausted. It seemed as if He were indifferent to their fate. In their natural reverence they long hesitated to rouse Him, but at last did so, and appealed to Him to save them. Amidst the terror around, He was entirely self-possessed. Rising, He gently rebuked the fear that had so unnerved them, and then, with an awful sublimity, rebuked the wind as if it had been a living power, and bade the angry sea be still; and both wind and sea at once obeyed Him. A great calm spread over the Lake.[l] "Why are ye fearful," said He, "O ye of little faith?" They had seen Him control disease, cast out devils, and even raise the dead; could they not have felt assured that neither winds nor waves could harm them when He was there? "What manner of man is this?" muttered the awe-struck apostles, "for He commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

The boat had been driven to the southern end of the Lake, and Christ consequently landed in the territory of the city of Gadara, a half-heathen town on the table-land, twelve hundred feet above the shore, and at some distance from it.[m] It was then in its glory, and lay round the top of the hill, looking far over the country. Long avenues of marble

pillars lined its streets; fine buildings of squared stones abounded. Two great amphitheatres of black basalt adorned the west and north sides, and there was a third theatre near its splendid public baths. It was the proud home of a great trading community, to whom life was bright and warm when Jesus landed that morning, on the shore beneath, and looked up towards its walls.

The hill on which Gadara[n] stands is of soft limestone, full, like the limestone of Palestine generally, of larger and smaller caves, many of which had been enlarged by the poorer classes and turned into dwelling-places,[o] for which they are used even yet, while others had been converted into tombs, with massy stone doors. The roadside is still strewn with a number of sarcophagi of basalt,[23] sculptured with low reliefs of genii, garlands, wreaths of flowers, and human faces, in good preservation, though long emptied of their dead.

[23] Burckhardt counted 71. Sepp, iii. 286

Madness in every form has, in all ages, been treated by the rude therapeutics of the East as a supernatural visitation, with which it is unsafe to interfere more than is needed, and, hence, even at this day, furious and dangerous maniacs may, from time to time, be seen in the towns of Palestine, in some cases, absolutely naked. Others, equally furious, often betake themselves to the mountains, and sleep in tombs and caves. In their paroxysms they become terribly dangerous, for the mental excitement gives them prodigious strength, and, hence, one is sometimes a terror to a whole neighbourhood.[24]

[24] Land and Book, 148.

Two such madmen, it seems, had taken up their abode in the caves and tombs, by the side of the road from the Lake to Gadara, and had made it almost impassable, from their fierceness. Jesus had hardly set His foot on shore before they sallied out towards Him, shrieking amidst the wild howls of their frenzy, as they approached; in deprecation of His interference with them. For some reason, now unknown, St. Mark and St. Luke speak only of one of these two sufferers, and as their account is the fuller, it is better to keep to it. Both were more than merely insane: they were possessed with devils, and conscious that they were so.

CHAP. XLII.

As in similar cases, the demoniac presence controlled the human will, and spoke in its own name. Both had already shown their terror at the coming of one whom they recognized as the Son of God, and adjured Him not to torment them before the time. But now the one of whom especially St. Mark and St. Luke speak, ran and fell down before Jesus, in the manner of Eastern reverence. He had been a terror to the whole country-side, for he would wear no clothes, but roamed the hills naked, and would live only in the tombs. Efforts had been made to put him in restraint, but neither ropes, nor the chains used, had sufficed to hold him.[p] Night and day he wandered the mountains, driven hither and thither by the mysterious possession that had him in its power, filling the air with his howls and shrieks, and cutting himself with sharp stones in his frenzy. But a greater than the strong man by whom he was enslaved was now here. Though dreading His presence, the demon could not keep away from it. It may be that, in the confused human consciousness, there was yet a glimmer of reason and moral health which drove him to the Saviour, but, if so, the spirit took the word from him, and spoke in his stead. "What is thy name?" said Jesus to the demon,—and the mysterious answer was, "Legion, for we are many." Forthwith came the command to come out of the man. But, true to diabolical instinct, the spirits would fain injure, even in leaving. On the slopes of the hill, a great herd of swine, the unclean and hateful abomination of the Jew, were feeding. They were, doubtless, owned by some of the heathen citizens of Gadara, for swine were in great demand as sacrifices and food among the foreign population. "Send us into the swine," cried the devils, "and do not drive us into the abyss,"[q] and the request was granted, to the destruction of the whole herd, which ran violently down the slope into the Lake and were drowned. Jesus, as Son of God, was free to act at His will with all things, for they were all His by the supreme right of creation, and this right is continually used in the moral government of the world. There is no ground for a moment's discussion respecting an act of One to whom all things were committed, as Head of the New Kingdom, by the Father.[25]

[25] Matt. 11. 27. Neander's Life of Christ, 341. Ullmann, 133. Dukes

It is idle, in our utter ignorance of the spirit world, to raise difficulties, as some have done, at this incident. It is recorded in three of the four Gospels, and cannot be explained away except by doing violence to the concurrent language of the three Evangelists. However mysterious, it is no more so than many facts in the life of Jesus, and must be taken simply as it stands.

The terror of the Apostles in the storm had shown how little Jesus could rely on them in the far worse trials of future years, but the mighty power He had shown in stilling the tumult of the elements, had been a lesson of confidence in Him, which they could hardly forget. It was a further step in their training to trust in Him, when they now saw Him perform the still more wonderful miracle of stilling the inward tempest of a human soul. In neither case could they say a word. They stood silent and ashamed. They were far, as yet, from having grown to the spiritual manhood of their great office.

The new teaching of Jesus had excited, for a time, a wide popularity that had even besieged His dwelling and thronged His person. The people had given Him their unhesitating confidence. But His collisions with the priests and Rabbis, and His disturbed relations to His family—with the whisperings of calumny on all sides—had chilled the enthusiasm of many. Distrust and suspicion had been sown in hitherto trustful minds, and these reports had penetrated even to the east of the Jordan. Their first open results were seen at Gadara, for it was here He first met with open want of sympathy with His person and work. The incident of the destruction of the swine, infuriating the owners, was enough, with what they had before heard, to turn the people against Him. The insinuation that He cast out devils by a league with their chief, filled weak minds with terror. He had hardly landed, and was in sore need of rest, but was at once forced to leave. For the first time, the disciples had an example of that invincible unbelief they were, hereafter, to meet so often. But, if Jesus were hindered from preaching in Decapolis, He had the satisfaction of leaving behind Him the former maniac, now clothed and in his right mind to

CHAP. XLII.

spread the fact of his deliverance. The poor man would fain have followed his Benefactor, but Jesus had other work for him. Contrary to His rule hitherto, He dismissed him, with directions to go home to his friends, and tell them the great things the Lord had done for him, and how He had had compassion on him. His preaching, however simple, was a seed of future good in these regions.

Forced to return to Capernaum, Jesus had scarcely landed, when a demand was made on His sympathy which He could not resist. One of the rulers, or chief men of the Synagogue, a local dignitary, named Jairus,[r] had an only daughter, a girl of about twelve, at the point of death. After all that had passed between Jesus and the Rabbis in the town, it must have been a great effort for one in the position and with the inevitable prejudices of Jairus, to seek His aid; but distress humbles pride, and often quickens faith. Pressing towards Him, and regardless of a crowd around, he fell at His feet, as inferiors then did, and still do, in the East, before those greatly above them, and besought Him to come and lay His hand on his child, and restore her to health. A heart that sympathized with all sorrow could not resist such an appeal, and, forthwith, He set out, through the throng that attended all His appearances, to the ruler's house. Before arriving there, however, a message came that the sufferer was dead, and that there was no need of further trouble. They little knew who was on His way to them. "Be not afraid," said He to the ruler, "only believe." The crowd of relatives and friends that always throng the chamber of death in Palestine, had already begun the pitiful wails and cries of Eastern lamentations, and the dirge-flutes[s] had already begun to add their sad burden to the tumult. Jesus had likely been delayed before starting, and, as preparations for burial commence as soon as breath leaves the body, the corpse had likely been washed, and laid out in the customary way for the grave, before He came.

The noise and confusion were not in keeping with the work Jesus intended. "Why make ye this ado and weep?"[t] said He, as He entered, "The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."[26 u] He used the word, doubtless, just as He after-

[26] Matt.9.18—26. Mark 5.22—43. Luke 8.41—56. Nork, 49. F. D. Robertson's Sermons 2nd series, 34.

wards did in the case of Lazarus, but they mocked at His pretended knowledge, which seemed to impute error to themselves, for they knew that she was dead. He was the Prince of Peace, and would have no such disturbing excitement, and therefore caused the crowd to leave the chamber of death. Only the father and the mother of the girl, and the three disciples, Peter, James, and John, were allowed to see His triumph over the King of Terrors. Taking the damsel by the hand, and using words of the language of His people,—Talitha cumi—Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise[x]—the spirit returned to the pale form, and she rose and walked. But in Capernaum, at a time when His enemies were so keenly afoot, cautious obscurity was needed, and He therefore enjoined silence as to the miracle.

On the way a touching incident had happened. A woman, troubled for many years with an internal ailment, after "having suffered many things of many physicians, and having spent her all," in the vain hope of cure, resolved to seek help from Jesus. It is no wonder that she had given up the faculty of the day, for their practice was in keeping with the scientific ignorance of the times. Lightfoot quotes from the Talmud the Jewish medical treatment of such a complaint. It was as follows: "Take of the gum of Alexandria the weight of a zuzee (a fractional silver coin); of alum the same; of crocus the same. Let them be bruised together, and given in wine to the woman that has an issue of blood. If this does not benefit, take of Persian onions three logs (pints); boil them in wine and give her to drink, and say, 'Arise from thy flux.' If this does not cure her, set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her right hand, and let some one come behind and frighten her, and say, 'Arise from thy flux.' But if that do no good, take a handful of cummin (a kind of fennel), a handful of crocus, and a handful of fenegreek (another kind of fennel). Let these be boiled in wine, and give them her to drink, and say, 'Arise from thy flux.'" If these do no good, other doses, over ten in number, are prescribed; among them, this —"Let them dig seven ditches, in which let them burn some cuttings of vines, not yet four years old. Let her take in her

hand a cup of wine, and let them lead her away from this ditch, and make her sit down over that. And let them remove her from that, and make her sit down over another, saying to her at each remove,—'Arise from thy flux.'"[27]

But these were only a few of the more harmless prescriptions in vogue. The condition of medical science in the East may be judged from its character at the centre of civilization and progress in the West. Pliny's Natural History gives us some curious glimpses of this. Ashes of burnt wolf's skull, stags' horns, the heads of mice, the eyes of crabs, owls' brains, the livers of frogs, vipers' fat, grasshoppers, bats, &c., supplied the alkalis which were prescribed. Physicians were wont to order doses of the gall of wild swine, of horses' foam, of woman's milk; the laying a piece of serpent's skin on an affected part, mixtures of the urine of cows that had not been sucked, the fat of bears, the juice of boiled bucks' horns, and other similar abominations.[28] For colic, they prescribed the dung of swine or hares, for dysentery powdered horses' teeth, for affections of the bladder, the urine of wild swine, or asses' kidneys, or plasters of mice-dung.[29] It was a great assistance in child-birth if the mother, or any of her circle, ate wolf's flesh.[30] Cold in the head was cured by kissing a mule's nose.[31] Sore throat was removed by embrocations of snails' slime, and the inhalation of the fumes of snails slowly burnt.[32] Quinsy was cured with the brain of the marsh owl;[33] diseases of the lungs with mouse-flesh,[34] disorders of the stomach with boiled snails, of which, however, only an odd number must be taken; weakness of the bowels with powdered bats; miscarriages were prevented by carrying about with one a living amphisbæna, a small snake which was believed to be able to go either backwards or forwards; frogs' eyes were useful for contusions, if the eyes were taken out at the conjunction of the moon, and kept in an egg-shell. Frogs boiled in vinegar were sovereign for toothache; for cough, the slime of frogs which had been hung up by the feet; for rupture, sea hedgehogs—the echinus—dissolved in asses' milk; for diseases of the glands, scorpions boiled in wine; for ague or intermittent fever, the

[27] Hor. Heb. ii. 413.

[28] Plin. Hist. Nat. 28. 48 ff.

[29] Plin. Hist. Nat. 53. f. 30. 21.

[30] Plin. Hist. Nat. 28. 77.

[31] Plin. Hist. Nat. 30. 11.

[32] Plin. Hist. Nat. 30. 11.

[33] Plin. Hist. Nat. 30. 12.

[34] Plin. Hist. Nat. 30. 14.

stone from the head of sea-eels, but it must be taken out at the full moon.[35]

CHAP. XLII.

[35] Plin. Hist. Nat. 30. 15; 20. 43, 44; 32 24, 26, 29, 32, 34; 37. 1.

The poor woman who now determined to seek help from Jesus had endured all the tortures of such medical treatment for twelve years, and, of course, was hurt rather than healed. She could not, however, venture to speak to Jesus; perhaps womanly shame to tell her disease in public kept her back; perhaps reverence for one so mysteriously above other men. Besides, she was unclean, and had to stand aloof from society. Joining the crowd following Him to the house of Jairus, she could only dare to touch the zizith,[z] or tassel, that hung on the corner of His outer garment, as on those of all other Jews.[36] The touch at once healed her, but it did not pass unnoticed. To have let it pass, might have seemed to give countenance to a superstitious fancy that His clothes had virtue in themselves. Turning round, He at once asked who touched Him. She could no longer hide her act, and, alarmed lest her boldness should be punished by the renewal of the trouble she now felt to have been healed, fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. It was enough. "Daughter," said He, "thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

[36] Numb. 15. 38. Sehet Welch Ein Mensch, 28. Saum, Winer. Godwyn's Aaron and Moses, 44. Schürer, 496.

# CHAPTER XLIII.

## DARK AND BRIGHT.

CHAP. XLIII.

AMONG the crowd that had gathered round the house of Jairus, the supernatural powers of Jesus found renewed exercise.[1] No sooner had He reappeared than two blind men followed Him to Peter's house, appealing to Him as the long-expected Messiah—"Have mercy upon us, Son of David." It was an invariable condition of His granting His miraculous aid that those who sought it should come with sincere and trustful hearts, for to such only could any higher good be gained by mere outward relief. The poor men eagerly assured Him that they believed He could do what they asked, and with a touch of His hand their eyes were opened. "According to your faith," said He, "be it unto you." The prudent charge not to speak of their restored sight, so necessary after all that had lately passed, was heard only to be forgotten, for, in their joy, they could not refrain from publishing it wherever they went. Another miracle of these days is recorded—the casting out a devil from one who was dumb, so that the sufferer, henceforth, spoke freely. The multitudes were greatly moved by such repeated demonstrations of transcendent power, which seemed to surpass all that had ever been seen in Israel, but this popularity only the more embittered His enemies. Repeating their old blasphemy, they could only mutter, "He casts out devils by being in league with their prince."[2] That He should thus recognize classes whom they represented as accursed, and from whom they withdrew themselves as unclean, seemed a reflection on their teaching and conduct. The blind, the leper, the poor, and the childless, were alike accounted stricken of God, and "dead," by the hard Judaism of the

[1] Matt. 9.27—34.

[2] Hor. Heb. ii. 203—205.

day,[3] and yet He associated freely with all who sought Him. Either He or they must be vitally wrong.

[3] Lightfoot, iii. 94.

It was now late in the year, and the Twelve had not yet gone out on any independent mission. He had taken them with Him on His circuits round Capernaum, to train them for wider fields. They had seen Him scattering the first seed, and caring for it in its growth, preserving what had been won; strengthening the weak, and calling the careless to repentance. On a narrow theatre they had had a widely varied experience. More lately they had had examples of unbelief in the Gadarenes, of weak faith in themselves, and of strong in the woman who had touched Jesus, and even in the two blind men. Another lesson, however, was needed—that of fierce opposition, which they were destined to meet so often hereafter.

Jesus had never visited Nazareth since His leaving it, and His heart, doubtless, yearned to proclaim the New Kingdom to the population among whom He had lived so long. The visit of Mary, and of His sisters and brothers, to Capernaum, to take Him away with them, however mistaken, had, doubtless, been prompted by the tenderest motives. Simple country people, they had heard from their holy Rabbis that He whom they so loved had overstrained His mind and body till His reason had failed, and that there was ground to fear that the Evil One had secretly taken advantage of His enthusiasm to work miracles by His hands. What could it be, indeed, but serving the Prince of Darkness, to slight the sacred traditions by acts like mixing with the common people without bathing afterwards, or breaking the Sabbath by healing on it, or by letting the disciples pluck corn and rub it in their hands on the holy day, or letting a leper come near Him, or eating with unclean publicans and sinners? He was a revolutionist: He was turning the world upside down: He was questioning the wisdom and authority of the Rabbis, and who but the devil or his emissary could do that?

It was a grave matter, however, to revisit Nazareth. If His nearest relatives had given way to such fears respecting Him, what could He expect from the multitude, who had

CHAP. XLIII. known Him only in His humble obscurity? He must seem to them, at the least, a dangerous disturber of the religion of the land; a fanatic who was stirring up confusion in Israel. But, where duty called, He never knew fear. In company with His disciples He set out from Capernaum, taking the road along the hills by the Lake, to Magdala, turning westward from it, through the valley of doves, by Arbela, with its high cliffs and robber caves, and the Horns of Hattin, past Tabor, south-westerly to Nazareth. It was only a journey of seven hours, and could easily be made in a day. He stayed in Nazareth several days,[4] no doubt in His mother's house.

[4] Mark 6. 2.

The sword had already begun to pierce the Virgin's heart.[5] Tender, humble, patient, and loving, she had trials we cannot realize. Knowing that her Son was the Messiah, her faith was sorely perplexed by His past course, for her ideas were those of her nation, and His were wholly the opposite. Her intimate knowledge of the sacred oracles of His people had shown itself in the *Magnificat:* her simple trust in God, her happy thankfulness of soul, her musing thoughtfulness, her modest humility, her strength of mind and energy of purpose, had all been seen in earlier days, and, no doubt, as she grew older, the light of a higher world was reflected with ever-increasing glory from her soul. But she was, and must have been, in sore trouble at the position of her Son. His first interview with her has been conceived thus:[a]—

[5] Luke 2. 35.

"Refreshment over, and thanks returned with covered head by Jesus, we may fancy how Mary followed Him to His own chamber. When, at last, she thus had Him alone, she fell on His neck, but instead of kissing Him, as she had done a thousand times, secretly, in spirit, she hid her face on His shoulder, and a stream of tears fell from her eyes. She wept without speaking, and would not let Him go.

"At last, Jesus said, 'Mother, be calm, and sit down by me, and tell me why you weep?' She did so, and began,—her hand in His, and His eyes fixed on hers—'I rejoice that at last I have you again, and grieve that we shall soon have once more to part.' 'Do you know, then,' asked Jesus,

'how soon or how late I shall leave this world?' 'Oh, my child,' replied Miriam, 'does not the deathly whiteness of your face tell me that you are wearing yourself out? and if you do not wear yourself out, though I am a woman, shut in by the four corners of my house, how can I help seeing that the hatred of your enemies increases daily, and that they have long sworn your death?' 'Granted,' broke in Jesus, 'but has not a great part of the people banded round me, and does not this stand in the way of the plots against me?' 'Indeed,' replied Miriam, 'the might of your preaching, your independence towards those in power at Jerusalem, the novelty of your whole appearance, and, above all, your miracles, have won many to your side, but the favour of the people is like a rain-torrent, which swells quickly, only to pass away as soon.' 'You are right, O blessed among women,' answered Jesus; 'most of this people seek not salvation from sin, but from quite other burdens, and when the decisive moment comes, they will forsake me, faint-heartedly and ungratefully. Your look into the future does not deceive you, but even the enmity and evil of men serve the counsels of God, which I came to fulfil. My way goes downwards to deep darkness, from which my soul shrinks, but I follow the will of my Father, whether the road be up or down.' As He spoke, His countenance, which had been clouded for a moment, was, as it were, transfigured, as the divine in His nature shone through the human; and Miriam, drinking in all these beams, thrilled with a more than mortal joy. There was a long pause. Miriam was silent, but she was, as always, wrapt in prayer. 'Fair,' said she, in the thoughts of her soul, 'is the rising sun, fair the green vine, fair the blue sea, but fairer than all is He. What an hour is this! My eyes have beheld the King in His beauty.'" The picture is beautiful, but it ascribes feelings to Mary which sprang only later.

It had been the instinctive practice of Jesus, from early childhood, to attend all the synagogue services, and He was still suffered to do so, in spite of the opposition He had excited.[6] When Sabbath came, therefore, He went to morning worship, and, after the reading of the Thorah, stood up in

[6] Sehet Welch ein Mensch, 34 Jost, i. 177. Godwyn, 71. Kitto's Cyclo., ii. 228.

CHAP. XLIII. silent offer to read the Haphtara of the day from the Prophets. He was forthwith called to the reading-desk, when the Sheliach Tsibbur, or Hazan, handed Him the roll. The lesson for the day could not have been more appropriate, for it contained the passage of Isaiah which spoke of the Messiah —"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to set at liberty the oppressed: to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."[b] Then, sitting down, He began His Midrasch, or explanation, commenting on the passage in language which astonished the hearers, and applying the predictions of the prophets to Himself.

But the honest wonder and delight at His words soon gave way to less friendly feeling. Whispers soon ran through the congregation respecting Him. How came He by such wisdom? He belonged to no school: claimed no place in the succession of Rabbis: spoke on His own authority, without ordination or sanction from the doctors. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Miriam and Joseph,[7] the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? and are not His sisters here, with us? They could not realize one with whom, and with whose circle, they had been on familiar relations of citizenship, as a prophet. Perhaps His freedom towards the traditions had offended the strict notions of some of His brothers, and the petty jealousy of a country village could not acknowledge a superior in one whom they had long treated as an equal, or even an inferior. His humble origin, His position as a carpenter, a trade He had learned among them, the absence of anything special in His family, and the fact that even they did not acknowledge His claims, were all remembered. Perhaps jealousy of Capernaum mingled with other thoughts, for He had done miracles there, and none in Nazareth. Moreover, if He did not belong to the schools, He could not speak or act by inspiration from above, for the Rabbis were the teachers appointed by God.[8] He must do His miracles, as the Rabbis said, by the help of the devil. He could not, they began to think, have come by His knowledge and eloquence

7 Luke 4. 22. Mark 6. 3.

8 Jesus u. Hillel, 17. Hausrath, i. 348, 396. Keim, ii. 423—425. Schenkel, 114, 115.

by fair means, or in the usual way. He must have unholy aid.

This was enough to turn the synagogue against Him, and His own words intensified the revolution of feeling, and brought it to a crisis. He frankly told them that He knew they thought "that He should help Himself before helping them, and remove the suspicion and disrespect they growingly felt, by miracles like those of Capernaum, as the only way to convince them of His claims! But He would not do in Nazareth what He had done there, for He well knew that no prophet had any honour in his own country. Had not Elijah confined his miraculous power to strangers, and they heathen, and withdrawn it from Israel? Their hardness of heart enforced the same on Him, and if Israel, as a whole, showed a like spirit, it also would see His mighty works withdrawn, and shown among the heathen." They could stand no more. The whole synagogue rose in commotion, and in wild uproar hustled Him towards the steep wall of rock[c] hard by, to throw Him from it, headlong. But His time was not yet come. A spell cast on the fierce mob, opened a way for Him, and He passed through them, and left the town unhurt.[9]

This disastrous result so far exceeded all previous experience, that Jesus Himself marvelled at their unbelief.[10] It even fettered His action, for "He could do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick and healed them."[11] He exerted His miraculous power only towards those in whom He found moral sympathy, however imperfect. The human will, mysteriously independent, needed to meet His supernatural might and give it entrance, as if the soul, opposed or indifferent, were wayside soil, on which the seeds of physical, as of moral blessing, fell without fruit.

But, though He left Nazareth never to return, He remained in the neighbourhood for a time, preaching in the villages of the great plain of Esdraelon, far and near. The whole theatre of His activity, however, in this circuit, as in previous ones, was limited beyond ordinary conception. From north to south, between Chorazin, above Capernaum, and Jezreel, in the great plain, was only a distance of ten

[9] Luke 4. 16—30. Matt. 13. 54—58. Mark 6. 1—6.

[10] Mark 6. 6.

[11] Mark 6. 6.

CHAP. XLIII.

hours, and from east to west, from Chorazin to Cana, or Nazareth, only six or seven. His whole life was spent in a space represented by one or two English counties, but the seed sown on this speck of ground is yet to cover the earth!

The apostles had now passed through a lengthened and varied experience, and besides the constant instruction of their Master's words and life, had learned from their own hearts how great their moral deficiencies still were. Their faint-heartedness, irresoluteness, and want of faith, were evident, and they were thus brought to that modest self-distrust which alone could fit them for the heavier duties before them. They were now to rise from the position of dependent and simple followers and scholars,[d] and become co-workers with Jesus, and that not only on the good soil already sown, but, rather, on the hard trodden paths, the stony ground, and that pre-occupied by thorns. In Gadara and Nazareth, they had learned to distinguish the opposite aspects of unbelief; in the one, that of common natural selfishness and harshness; in the other, that of proud perverted fanaticism. After long wanderings and continuous trials, the Twelve were now, in their Master's opinion, in a measure prepared to work by themselves[e] in spreading the New Kingdom. In spite of the opposition of the interested professional classes, the enthusiasm of the people to hear the new teaching was unabated. Multitudes followed Jesus wherever He appeared; the synagogues still offered access to the whole population each Sabbath, and in all the cities and villages of Galilee, the "Gospel of the Kingdom" was the great topic of conversation.

The times moreover, were exciting. The whole country rang with the story of a massacre of Galilæans by Pilate, at the last Feast of Tabernacles—perhaps, at the same tumult in which Joseph Barabbas was arrested as a ringleader, to be afterwards freed instead of Jesus.[12] Pilate was always ready to shed the blood of a people he hated, and the hot-blooded Galilæans, ever ready to take affront at the hated infidels, gave him only too many excuses for violence. They had a standing grievance in the sacrifices offered daily for the

[12] Ewald, v. 91. Keim, ii. 431

Empire and the Emperor,[13] and at the presence of a Roman garrison and Roman pickets at the Temple, during the feasts, to keep the peace, as Turkish soldiers do at this day, during Easter, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But Pilate had given special offence, at this time, by appropriating part of the treasures of the Temple, derived from the Temple tax levied on all Jews over the world, and amounting to vast sums in the aggregate—to defray the cost of great conduits he had begun for the better supply of Jerusalem with water. Stirred up by the priests and Rabbis, the people had besieged the government house when Pilate came up to the city at the feast, and with loud continuous cries had demanded that the works be given up. Seditious words against himself, the representative of the Emperor, had not been wanting. He had more than once been forced to yield to such clamour, but this time determined to put it down. Numbers of soldiers, in plain clothes, and armed only with clubs, surrounded the vast mob, and used their cudgels so remorselessly that many, both of the innocent and guilty, were left dead on the spot. The very precincts of the Temple were invaded by the legionaries, and some pilgrims who were so poor that they were slaying their own sacrifices, were struck down while doing so, their blood mingling with that of the beasts they were preparing for the priests,[f] and thus polluting the House of God.[14] It was an unprecedented outrage, and filled every breast in Judea and Galilee with the wildest indignation, though such brawls were of frequent occurrence.[15] The excitement had penetrated even the palace at Tiberias, and kindled bitter ill-feeling in Antipas towards Pilate, for the men slain were Galilæan subjects.

[13] Godwyn, 60.

[14] Ewald, v. 90. Hausrath, i. 308, 339.

[15] Ant. xx. 5. 3. Ewald, v. 90.

Another misfortune had happened in Jerusalem a short time before. A tower, apparently on the top of Ophel, near the Fountain of the Virgin opposite Siloam, had fallen—perhaps one of the buildings connected with Pilate's public-spirited steps to bring water to the Holy City—and eighteen men had been buried beneath it; in the opinion of the people, as a judgment of God, for their having helped the sacrilegious undertaking.[g]

The cry for a national rising to avenge the murdered

CHAP. XLIII. pilgrims doubtless rose on every side, but Jesus did not sanction it for a moment. He saw the arm of God even in the hated Romans, and in the fall of the tower, and, instead of sympathizing with them for the one, and joining in a cry for insurrection for the other, told His astonished hearers that the same horrors were like to fall on the whole nation. "Suppose ye," He asked, "that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they have suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all perish in like manner. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, suppose ye that they were sinners above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye will all perish in the same manner." "Israel," He added, "is like a fig-tree, planted by a man in his vineyard, which year after year bore no fruit.[h] Wearied by its barrenness, the householder was determined to cut it down, and it was now spared at the intercession of the vine-dresser, only for another year, to give it a last respite. After that, if it still bore no fruit, he would cut it down, as merely cumbering the ground.[16 i] That year of merciful delay was the passing moment of His own presence and work among them. The nation had given itself up to a wild dream, that would end in its ruin. Led by the priests and Rabbis, it trusted that God would appear on its behalf, and by a political revolution overthrow the hated foreign domination. The fruits of repentance and faith, which God required, were still wanting. As the vine-dresser, Jesus had done all possible to win them to a better frame. He had warned, besought, counselled; but they were wedded to their sins and their sinful pride. His peaceful kingdom offered them the only escape from ruin, here and hereafter; but as a nation, they were more and more turning towards the worldly schemes of their ecclesiastical leaders, and lent a deaf ear to all proposals of spiritual self-reform. Continuance in this course would bring the fate of those they now lamented on the whole race. If they rejected Him, God would erelong destroy them as a people."

i Luke 13. 1—9.

There was still another matter agitating all minds, and helping to keep up the volcanic excitement of the country.

John lay still a prisoner, in the black fortress of Machaerus, almost within sight, and each day men wondered if Antipas had yet dared to put him to death.

Under any circumstances, the crowds following Jesus would have touched a heart so tender, but their wild despair and religious enthusiasm made the sight of them doubly affecting. Might they not be won to the peace and joy of the glad tidings? They seemed to Him, the Good Shepherd, like a great flock needing many shepherds, but with none; footsore with long travel, wandering they knew not whither, with no one to lead them to the still waters and green pastures. "The harvest" said He to His disciples, "is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." There were multitudes to be won for the New Kingdom,—multitudes prepared to hear, for their spirits were broken under personal and national sorrow. But the number of right teachers was small.[k]

He decided, therefore, to delay no longer sending forth the Twelve. Calling them together, He told them His purpose, and fitted them to carry it out. As a proof of their mission from Him, He invested them with authority over spirits, and gave them power to heal diseases. They were to confine themselves for the present to Jewish districts, avoiding Samaritan towns, and not entering on the road to heathen parts. Galilee itself was thus virtually their field of labour, for heathenism had a footing in every place round it, and within a few miles of them lay Gadara, Hippos, Pella, Scythopolis, and even Sepphoris, with heathen worship, in their midst. Judea and Jerusalem were not to be thought of. The simple Galilæans would be a better beginning for the Apostles than the dark bigoted population of the south. One day they would be free to visit Samaria,[17] as He Himself had already. Meanwhile they must not stir up Jewish hatred by going to either Samaritans or heathens. Moreover, their own Jewish prejudices unfitted them for a mission to any but Jews, for, even after this, the first signs of hostility made John wish to call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village, and they were not fit as yet to handle aright the

[17] Furrer, 242. Nork, 61.

k Matt. 10. 1—11. 1. Mark 6. 7—13 Luke 9. 1—6.

many questions such a journey would elicit. Besides, Israel must have another year in which to bring forth fruit; and withal, it was their first independent journey.[18]

[18] Keim, ii. 325. Ewald, v. 425.

The burden of their preaching was to be the repetition of that of John, and of Jesus Himself, when He began. "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Like John, they were heralds, to prepare the way. "Heal the sick," said He, "raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons." They had received their miraculous gifts freely, and must dispense them as freely.[l] Their equipment was to be of the simplest, for superfluity diverted the mind from their great object, and made an extra burden which would only hinder them on their journeys. It became them, also, by their humble guise, to disarm the suspicion of worldliness, and to show their implicit trust in God. They were to take no money; not even any copper coin, in their girdles—the usual Eastern purse; nor a wallet for their food by the way; nor two under garments, but were to wear only one; nor were they to have shoes, which looked like luxury, but only the sandals of the common people, and they were to have only one staff.[m] They were to go as the peasants of Palestine often do yet, trusting to hospitality for food and shelter; offering in their simplicity a striking contrast to the flowing robes and bright colours of the population at large. But they were not to go alone. Each must have a companion, to accustom them to brotherly communion, to give counsel and help to each other in difficulties, and to cheer each other on the way. We may fancy that Peter was sent with Andrew, James with John, Philip with Bartholomew, the grave Thomas with the practical Matthew, James the Small with Judas the Brave-hearted, and Simon the Zealot with Judas Iscariot; the brother with the brother; the friend with the friend; the zealous with the cold.

No mention is made of the synagogues in their instructions; it may be, because the Apostles were not yet confident enough to come forward so publicly. It was to be a house to house mission. While every traveller, according to the custom of the country, greeted his acquaintances with laborious formality, raising the hand from the heart to the

forehead, and then laying it in the right hand of the person met; even, according to circumstances, bowing thrice, or as many as seven times; they were forbidden to indulge in any greetings by the way. Time was too precious, and their mission too earnest for empty courtesies. On entering a town or village, they were to make inquiries, to guard against their seeking hospitality from the unworthy, but having once become guests, they were to stay in the same family till they left the place. They were to enter the dwelling which heartily welcomed them, with a prayer for its peace.[n] Any house or city, however, that refused to receive them, was to be treated openly as heathen, by their shaking off its dust from their feet as they left it.[o] But woe to such as brought down this wrath; it would be better at the last day for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the Galilæan village in such a case!

To these directions for the way Jesus added warnings that might have well filled with dismay men less devoted. He predicted for them only persecution and universal hatred, jails, public whipping, and even death, but cheered them by the promise that their brave and faithful confession of faith in Him, before governors and kings, would serve His cause, and that endurance to the end would secure their eternal salvation. They would be like helpless sheep in the midst of treacherous wolves.[19] Even their work would be different from what they might expect. To day it was an olive-branch; to-morrow it would be a sword. Instead of peace, it would divide households and communities, and turn the closest relations into deadly enemies.[p] They would need to labour diligently, for before they had gone over all the towns of Israel, He Himself would come to their aid as the risen and glorified Messiah. They might expect slander, for He Himself had been charged with being in league with the devil, and they could not hope to fare better.[20] They were, however, to be stout of heart, for the Providence that watches the birds of the air would keep them safe.[q] He had nothing to offer in this world, but if they confessed Him here He would confess them, in the great day, before His Father. If, on the other hand, they denied Him, He would,

[19] Tristram, 153 Newman's Select Sermons, 293.

[20] Gfrörer, i. 381, 385.

CHAP. XLIII.

on that day, deny them. He frankly demanded a loyalty so supreme and undivided, that the most sacred claims of blood were to be subordinated to it. Instead of receiving honours, He told them that they might expect to be crucified, as He would be.[21] To save this life by denying Him would be to lose the life to come; but to lose it by fidelity to Him, was to find life eternal.[22] Amidst all this dark anticipation, they need not fear for their bodily wants, for the greater the danger braved the greater would be the reward in His kingdom to those who showed them favour,[23] and this would always secure them friends.

[21] Godwyn, 209.

[22] Schleiermacher's Predigten, i. 278.

[23] Nork, 66.

Such an address, under such circumstances, was assuredly never given before or since. To propose to found a kingdom by the services of men, who, as their reward, would meet only shame, torture, and death; to claim from them an absolute devotion, from mere personal reverence and love, with no prospects of reward except those of another world; and to launch an enterprise thus supported only by moral influences, in the face of the opposition of all the authority of the day, simply to win men to righteousness by the display of pure, unselfish devotion to their good, astounds us by the sublime grandeur of the conception.

No details are given of the mission, except that the Twelve went on a lengthened circuit through the towns and villages of Galilee, preaching the need of repentance, and the glad tidings of the New Kingdom;[24] and that their ministry was accompanied by miraculous works of mercy—the casting out devils, and the anointing many sick with oil, and healing them—which were themselves proofs of their higher success, since such wonders were, doubtless, as in the case of their Master, wrought only when there was a measure of faith.[r]

[24] Mark 6. 12. Luke 9. 6.

How long this mission lasted is uncertain. It may have embraced weeks, or have extended over months, though, as the first journey of the Twelve, alone, it is not likely to have been very protracted. The success must have been unusual, for, as they appeared, two by two, in the villages of Galilee, the name of Jesus was on every tongue, and penetrated even the gilded saloons of the hated Roman palace of Antipas, at Tiberias. Jesus, Himself, had not been idle while His fol-

lowers were away, for their departure was the signal for a new, solitary journey, to preach and teach in the various cities.[25] His name was thus spread abroad everywhere, and His claims and character discussed by all. He had been nearly two years before the world, and had steadily risen in popular favour; in spite of the hierarchical party. His claims became the engrossing topic of the day. Hitherto the most opposite views had perplexed all alike. More than all men, Antipas felt his eyes irresistibly fixed on Him, for his conscience was ill at ease. He had at last put John to death, and, true to his superstitious and weak nature, concluded that Jesus was no other than the murdered Baptist risen from the dead, and clothed with the awful powers of the invisible world. Since that dear head had fallen, the weak and crafty worldling had hoped for peace and security, but an awful echo of the voice he had silenced sounded louder and more terrible, from the lips of Jesus, at his very doors. He was now again in Tiberias, and the wide dispersion of a whole band of preachers of the same apparently revolutionary Kingdom, in his immediate territory, seemed a designed defiance of his violence at Machaerus, and its counterstroke. It was certain that, when he gained courage enough, he would try to repeat the murder of the first prophet by that of the second. Suspicion and crafty foresight were his characteristics. Jesus readily, however, learned all that passed respecting Himself in the palace, for He had followers in it, such as Johanna, the wife of Chouza, and Menahem, the foster-brother of the tetrarch, and He was on His guard.

[25] Matt. 11. 1. 14. 1, 2, 6—12. Mark 6. 14—16, 21—29. Luke 9. 7—9.

While Antipas thus interpreted the rumours respecting Jesus, others formed an opinion hardly more acute or thoughtful, who took Him for a second Elias. John and Elijah, in their whole spirit and work, were men devoted to the traditional and outward theocracy: men who looked to the past. Jesus, on the other hand, had proclaimed, even in His consecration sermon on the mountain, that He devoted His life to the founding a New Covenant. Their opinion was nearer the truth who believed Him a prophet, though distance threw a mysterious glory round

CHAP. XLIII.

the prophets of the past, which they failed to realize of one in their midst.

The news of the death of John seems to have reached Jesus about the same time as the Apostles returned, and, doubtless, seemed the prediction of His own fate. The prospect of the cross had been before His mind from the first, for even at the Jordan He had been announced as the Lamb of God. The Sermon on the Mount had struck the key-note of self-sacrifice, and He had once and again foretold, more or less clearly, that He felt His path would be towards a violent death. It was inevitable that one whom the interest, the pride, and the reputation of the existing ecclesiastical authorities combined to proscribe, must fall before their hostility. Even the prophets, as a rule, had suffered violent deaths, though their protest against the corruption of their day involved no condemnation of the religious economy of the nation. But He had committed Himself deliberately to principles fatal to the theocracy; for He had violated tradition; He had eaten with publicans, and He had denounced the leaders of the people as hypocrites, blind, and wicked. It was a life and death matter for the hierarchical party to try to quench in His own blood the fire He had kindled.

The meeting with the Apostles was likely pre-arranged, and Jesus returned to the neighbourhood of Capernaum, or, perhaps, of Tiberias,[26] to effect it. He had been away for a length of time, and His absence had evidently been deeply felt, for multitudes at once gathered round Him again, as soon as He re-appeared. Every village, far and near, poured out its population to hear Him once more, and the throng was increased by the countless passing bands of pilgrims to the Feast at Jerusalem, for Passover was near at hand.[27] He needed rest, and there was much to hear from the Twelve, but it was impossible to have either the rest or the quiet intercourse amidst such crowds. They had no leisure even to eat.[28] It was, moreover, no longer safe for Him to be in the territories of Antipas.[29] Taking the Twelve with Him, therefore, He crossed over to the tetrarchy of Philip, at the head of the Lake, going by water, and landing at the Plain of Batiha, under the shadow of Bethsaida, or Julias, where He

[26] John 6. 23.

[27] John 6. 4.

[28] Mark 6. 31.

[29] Matt. 14. 13—21. Mark 6. 30—44. Luke 9. 10—17.

could hope for privacy, and secure a safe retreat in the quiet glens, with their rich green slopes, passing gradually into the marshes round the entrance of the Jordan into the Lake.[30]

[30] Land and Book, 372.

But it was vain to hope for escape. Some had seen Him put off, and watched the direction of the boat till they knew that He was making for Batiha, which was known as one of His resorts. It was only six miles across the water from Capernaum. The news soon spread, and crowds of those most anxious to see and hear Him set out by land for the spot. The distance was farther than by the Lake, but they ran, afoot, out of all the villages, and were waiting for Him when He arrived. He had come for rest, but it was denied Him now as at other times. Looking up as the boat touched the shore, the slopes were alive with multitudes who showed by their very presence that they felt themselves like sheep without a shepherd. The evil times, the restless uneasiness of all, the high religious excitement, the darkness of their spiritual condition, and the equal misery of their national prospects, combined to touch His soul with pity. They had brought all the sick who could be carried, or who could come, and as He passed through the crowds He healed them by a word or touch. They had greater wants, however, than bodily healing, and He could not let them go away uncomforted. Ascending the hill-side, and gathering the vast throng before Him, He "spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and taught them many things."

The day was spent in this arduous labour, but the people still lingered. They had been fed with the bread of truth, and seemed indifferent, for the time, to anything besides. Poor shepherdless sheep! it was His delight, as the Good Shepherd, to lead them to rich pastures, and as they sat and stood round Him, they forgot their bodily wants in the beauty and power of His words.

It was now towards evening, and the company showed no signs of dispersing.[31] Food could not be had in that lonely place, and the Twelve, afraid on this and perhaps other grounds, anxiously urged Jesus to send them away, that they might buy bread in the country round. To their astonishment,

[31] Matt. 14. 14

CHAP. XLIII. however, He told them they must themselves supply them; it would never do to dismiss them hungry: they might faint by the way. No more impossible request could have been made. Between thirty and forty pounds' worth of bread, at the value of money in those days, would be needed to give each even an insufficient share.[32 s] They could not understand Him. Andrew, perhaps the provider for the band, could only demonstrate their helplessness by saying that the lad in attendance on them had only five loaves of common barley bread—the food of the poor—and two small fishes, but what, he added, were they among so many?

[32] John 6. 7.

"Make the men sit down," said Jesus. It was in Nisan, "the month of flowers," and the slopes were rich with the soft green of the spring grass—that simplest and most touching lesson of the care of God for all nature. The Twelve presently divided the vast multitude into companies of fifties and hundreds, reminding St. Peter, long after, from the bright colours of their Eastern dresses, of the flower-beds of a great garden.[t]

This done, like the great Father of the far-stretching household, Jesus took the bread and the fishes, and looking up to Heaven, invoked the blessing of God on their use,[u] and giving thanks for them,[33] as was customary before all meals, proceeded to hand portions to the disciples, who, in turn, gave them to the crowd. Elisha[34] had once fed a hundred men with twenty loaves, and increased the oil in the widow's cruse, and Elijah had made the bread and the oil of the widow of Sarepta endure till the Lord sent rain on the earth. But Christ, from three loaves and two small fishes, not only satisfied the hunger of five thousand men, besides women and children,[35] but did it so royally that the fragments that remained were enough to fill twelve of the little baskets in which Passover pilgrims and other Jews were wont to carry their provisions for the way.[x] More was left than there had been at first!

[33] Luke 12. 16. John 6. 11.

[34] 2 Kings 4. 42.

[35] Matt 14. 21.

Jesus had thus supplied the wants of the needy, in a way the full significance of which was as yet far beyond what the disciples either understood or dreamed, for He had

shown how there dwelt in Him a virtue sufficient to meet all higher wants, as well as the lower, so that none who believed in Him would ever have either hunger or thirst of soul any longer, but would find in Him their all.[36] Had they known it, He had shown them that He Himself was the Bread of Life, that came down from Heaven.[37] But they at least knew how much they came short of a lofty faith, which, in loving trust, despairs least when the need is greatest, and in the strength of which all is doubled by joyful imparting, while abundance remains instead of want.[38]

[36] John 6. 35.

[37] Ver. 41. 48.

[38] Ewald, v. 441

The effect on the multitude was in keeping with the ideas of the time. Murmurs ran through the excited throng, that Jesus must be the expected prophet—the Messiah. Like Moses, He had fed Israel by a miracle, in the wilderness, which the Rabbis said the Messiah would do. Surely He would manifest Himself now, if they put Him at their head? They had no higher idea of the Messianic Kingdom than the outward and political, and would hasten its advent by forcing Him, if possible, to proclaim Himself King, and thus open the longed-for war with the hated Romans, in which God would appear on their behalf.

Material power, not moral preparation, was the national conception of the path to the Messianic triumph. The Rabbis and the people had decided for themselves the way in which the salvation of Israel was to show itself, but between their views and those of Jesus there was a great gulf. He would not use force, and they were bent on it. His refusal to carry out their plan made opposition inevitable, and it necessarily grew deeper each day as that refusal became more clearly final.

While visions of national splendour dazzled the thoughts of His countrymen, the ideal of greatness for Himself and them lay with Jesus in humiliation. His path was in the lowly valleys, not on the high places of the earth. He aimed only to find the humble and needy, to seek the lost, to serve rather than to be served. Hiding His glory in outward lowliness, and never seeking honour from men, He had, throughout, identified His will with that of God, with a self-restraint which showed the grandest force of will.

CHAP. XLIII. The outward and material were indifferent to Him, and utterly opposed to the divine purpose, if made an aim in connection with His work. The reign of God in His own soul was the perfect realization of the only kingdom He sought to found in the souls of men at large, and it had nothing in common with the vulgar parade of an earthly royalty.[39]

[39] Ullmann. 45.

As soon, therefore, as He perceived the design of the crowd to force Him to act as their leader, and to instal Him at Jerusalem at the head of a national insurrection, He hurriedly left them, and went into the bosom of the hills, beyond their reach. But that He had declined to be led by them to the throne of David, in their way, was, in reality, a step towards the Cross.. The very proposal was a foreshadowing of His final rejection and violent death. The solitude of the mountains was His fittest retreat, to strengthen Himself against this new assault of the temptation He had so often repelled, and to gird up His soul for the trials that lay in His path.

At the first signs of tumult among the people, He had sent off the Twelve to cross the Lake again at once, to the Bethsaida near Capernaum,[40] while He dismissed the multitudes. They had waited for Him till night fell, but, at last, as He did not come, they set off without Him. As they rowed, however, a sudden squall, blowing every way, struck down on the Lake from the hills around, and caught their boat. It was the last watch of the night—between three and six o'clock in the wild morning, and the weary boatmen had been toiling at their oars since the night before, but though the whole distance to be rowed was only six miles, they had only made two-thirds of the way. Jesus was not with them to still the wind, and their own strength and skill had availed little. But suddenly, close to the boat, they saw through the gleam of the water and the broken light of the stars, a human form walking on the sea. The sight would have troubled men less superstitious than simple fishermen, and made them cry out in their terror. But it was only momentary, for close at hand, so that it was heard above the wind and the waves, came the words, "Be of good cheer; it is I: be

[40] Matt. 14. 22—33. John 6. 15—21. Mark 6. 45—52.

not afraid," in a voice which they knew was that of Jesus. Always impulsive, the warm-hearted Peter could not wait till the Deliverer came among them. "Would not his Master suffer him to come to Him on the water?" Then followed that touching incident which has supplied a lesson for all ages; the safe footing on the waves while the apostle kept his eyes fixed on his Lord, and the instant sinking when his faith gave way—an image of his whole nature, and of all his future life. But the saving hand was near, and with the gentle rebuke, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" they were in the boat, and as they entered, the wind ceased, so that, presently, with easy sweeps, their oars carried them to the shore.

Like the mass of men, the Twelve were slow at reasoning or applying broadly the plainest lesson. Had they realized the greatness of the miracle they had seen the day before, even the walking on the sea, and the calming of the wind, would have seemed only what they might have expected. But their minds were dull and unreflecting, and their amazement knew no bounds.[y] It is the characteristic of the uneducated, that they think without continuity, and forthwith relapse into stolid vacuity after the strongest excitement. The miracle of the loaves had ceased to be a wonder, for it was some hours old. But this new illustration of the superhuman power of their Master was so transcendent, that their wonder passed into worship. The impression, like many before, might soon lose its force; but for the moment they were so awed that, approaching Him, they kneeled in lowliest reverence, and, through Peter, ever their spokesman, paid Him homage in words then first heard from human lips—"Of a truth Thou art the Son of God."

# CHAPTER XLIV.

## THE TURN OF THE DAY.

CHAP. XLIV.

WHEN day broke on the scene of the miraculous meal of the evening before, a number who had slept in the open air, through the warm spring night, still remained on the spot. They had noticed that Jesus did not cross with the Twelve, and fancied that He was still on their side of the Lake. Meanwhile, a number of the boats which usually carried over wood or other commodities, from these eastern districts, had come from Tiberias; blown roughly on their way by the same wind that had been against the disciples. In these, many, finding that Jesus had left the neighbourhood, took passage, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Him.[1] It was one of the days of synagogue worship—Monday or Thursday—and they met Him on His way to the synagogue, to which they accordingly went with Him.[2] Excitement was at its height. News of His arrival had spread far and near, and His way was hindered by crowds, who had, as usual, brought their sick to the streets through which He was passing, in hope of His healing them.

[1] John 6. 22—7. 1.

[2] John 6. 59. Matt. 14. 34—36. Mark 6. 53—56.

The incidents of the preceding day might well have raised desires for the higher spiritual food which even the Rabbis taught them to expect from the Messiah. But they felt nothing higher than vulgar wonder, and came after Jesus in hopes of further advantages of the same kind, and, above all, that they would still find in Him a second Judas the Gaulonite, to lead them against the Romans. A few, doubtless, had worthier thoughts, but, to the mass, the Messiah's kingdom was as gross as Mahomet's paradise. They were to be gathered together into the garden of Eden, to eat, and drink, and satisfy themselves all their days, with houses of precious

stones, beds of silk, and rivers flowing with wine, and spicy oil for all.[3] It was that He might gain all this for them that they had wished to set Him up as king.

Feeling how utterly He and they were at variance, Jesus resolved to enter into no irrelevant conversation with them, and waiving aside a question as to His crossing the Lake, at once pointed out their misapprehension respecting Him, and urged them not to set their hearts on the perishable food of the body, but to seek earnestly for that food of the soul which secures eternal life. As long as they did not seek this beyond all things else, they missed their highest advantage. As the Son of Man—the Messiah—accredited from God the Father by His wondrous works,[4] He was appointed to give them this heavenly food, and would do so if they showed a sincere desire for it by becoming His disciples.[5]

The Rabbis were accustomed to teach by metaphors, and the people saw at once that He alluded to some religious duty. What it was, however, they did not understand, but fancied He referred to some special works appointed by God.[6 a] As Jews, they had been painfully keeping all the Rabbinical precepts, in the belief that their doing so gave them a claim above. Yet, if He had some additional injunctions, they were willing to add them to the rest, that they might legally qualify themselves for a share in the New Kingdom of God, as a right.[7] But, instead of multiplied observances, He startled them by announcing that citizenship in the New Theocracy required no more than their believing in Him, as sent from the Father. In this lay all, for the manifold "works of God" would spring naturally from it.[8]

Those of the crowd around who had not seen the miracle of the day before had, doubtless, ere this, heard of it. It had been an amazing proof of supernatural power, but their craving for wonders demanded something still more astounding, as a justification of His claim to be "the Sent of the Father." A voice,[9] perhaps that of some open opponent—for the Rabbis had taken care to be present—therefore broke in, apparently half mocking, with the question, "What 'sign' He had to show, that they might see it, and believe Him?

[3] Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. iii. 304.

[4] John 5. 36.

[5] John 6. 28.

[6] John 6. 28.

[7] Luthardt, ii. 52.

[8] Lücke, ii. 76.

[9] "The Jews" is the expression used by John for Christ's opponents. It is used here.

CHAP. XLIV.

Moses proved his authority by stupendous 'signs.' What sign worthy the name do *you* do, to show your right to introduce new laws, in addition to his, or in their room? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'[10] What voucher as great as this do you offer?"

The miracle of the manna had become a subject of the proudest remembrances and fondest legends of the nation. "God," says the Talmud, "made manna to descend for them, in which were all manner of tastes. Every Israelite found in it what best pleased him. The young tasted bread, the old honey, and the children oil."[11] It had even become a fixed belief that the Messiah, when He came, would signalize His advent by a repetition of this stupendous miracle. "As the first Saviour—the deliverer from Egyptian bondage," said the Rabbis, "caused manna to fall for Israel from heaven, so the second Saviour—the Messiah—will also cause manna to descend for them once more, for it is written,[12] 'There will be abundance of corn in the land.'"[13] Moses had gradually been half deified. It was taught that God counted him of as much value as all Israel.[14] Most believed that he was five grades in knowledge above all creatures, even angels. The lower part of his body was human; the upper divine. On his entrance to paradise, God left the upper heavens and came to him, and the angels also came and ministered to him, and sang hymns before him. Even the sun, the moon, and the stars came, and craved liberty from him to shine on the world, which they could not have done had he refused.

It was thus only an expression of the public feeling of the day when Jesus was asked to repeat the descent of manna—the greatest of the miracles of Moses. It is in human nature, but above all, in Eastern human nature, to associate high office and dignity with display and outward circumstance, and what must hence have been the popular expectations of external grandeur and majesty in the Messiah, when they saw a demigod in Moses, whom He was to resemble? No demand for overpowering "signs" of the divine approval of a claim to be the Messiah could, in this point of view, be too great.

10 Exod. 16. 4.

11 Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. iii. 304.

12 Ps. 72. 16.

13 Nork, 174.

14 Gfrörer, i. 217—220.

from one whose outward appearance, and whole life, in other respects, so entirely contradicted the general Messianic anticipations.

But Jesus, at all times resolute in withholding miraculous action for any personal end, had no thought of satisfying their craving for wonders. "Moses indeed," said He, "gave you manna, but it was not the true Bread of Heaven." He wished to draw them from the merely outward miracle to that far higher wonder, even then enacting before their eyes, the free offer of the true Bread of Heaven,[15] in the offer of Himself as their Saviour. The manna, He implied, could only by a figure be called bread of Heaven, for it was material and perishable, and the heaven from which it fell was only the visible sky, not that in which God dwells. Moses gave what was called by a figure, "Bread of Heaven," but the *true* Bread of Heaven only His Father could give, and He was giving it now. That only can be the true Bread of God, which comes[b] down from the highest heaven,—He might have said, from the pure heaven of His own soul,—and gives life to the world, for with Jesus, those who had not this bread were spiritually dead.[16]

"Master," cried many voices, "give us this bread henceforth, for life." Like Ponce de Leon, with the spring of Unfading Youth in Florida,[17] they thought that the new gift would literally make them immortal, and eagerly clamoured to have a boon so far in advance of the mere barley loaves of the day before.

"I am the Bread of Life," replied Jesus; in a moment scattering to the winds their visions of material plenty and endless natural life. Then, explaining Himself, He added, "He that comes to me shall never hunger, and he that believes on me shall never thirst. But, as I said a moment ago,[18] you have not only heard of me, but have also seen me, and been eye-witnesses of my deeds as the Messiah, and yet you do not believe. All whom the Father gives me will come to me. You may resist my invitations or yield,[19] but he who resists is not given me by my Father. Believe me, no hungering and thirsting soul that comes to me will I cast out of my Kingdom when it is erected. How could I,

15 Lücke, ii. 76

16 Verses 35, 39, 40.

17 Bancroft's United States i. 23.

18 Verse 29

19 John 5. 40; 3. 19; 1. 11 Matt. 23. 3'

CHAP. XLIV. indeed, when I have come down from heaven, not to act on my own human will, but only to carry out the will of my Father in Heaven, which is, in this matter,—that, of all—not Jews alone, but all, without exception—whom He has given me I should lose none, but should raise them up in the last day—or, in other words, should give them eternal life."

[20] Verse 59.

These words, spoken in the synagogue at Capernaum,[20] created a great sensation. The congregation, comprising some Rabbis and other enemies, had, from time to time, in Jewish fashion, freely expressed their feelings, and had taken such offence at His claim to be the Bread that came down from heaven, that their whispers and murmurs now ran through the whole building. "How can He say He has come down from heaven? We know His father and mother. He is from Nazareth, and would have us believe He is from God above. He is mad. He has a devil. When the Messiah comes, no one will know whence He is."[21]

[21] John 7. 27. Heb. 7. 3. See vol. i. pp. 81, 148, 576.

"Do not murmur among yourselves," said Jesus. "Natural sense is worth nothing in this matter—it will never help you to understand how I am the True Bread come down from heaven. If you wish to know how I can say so, you must submit yourselves to the teaching and influence of God: must hear and learn what God says, for it tells us in the prophets—'They shall be all taught of God.'[22] Only those thus taught come to me or believe in me. The yielding your souls to God and your rising thus to communion with Him by spiritual oneness, can alone lead to the faith that recognizes the truth respecting me."

[22] Isaiah 54. 13.

"Perhaps you think," He continued, to paraphrase His words, "that to hear and learn of God, you must yourselves see Him, or commune directly with Him? If so, you greatly err. To see God immediately, face to face, is given to no mortal man, but only to Him who is from God. No one but His only-begotten Son, who was in heaven and has come down thence, has seen, and now sees, the Father, and reveals Him to man. Him, therefore, the Son—that is, Me, must you hear; from Me must you learn; if you would hear and learn from God.[23] Amen, amen, I say to you, He that believes on me as—thus—the 'Word' and Revealer of the

[23] John 8. 47; 14. 9; 6 47.

Father, has everlasting life. I, myself, am, as such, that Bread of Life of which I have spoken. Your forefathers ate the manna which Moses gave in the wilderness, and died; but it is the grand virtue of the True Bread of Heaven, that if a man eat of it—that is, if he receive my words into his soul, he shall not die, but shall have everlasting life."

"I am not only the Life-giving Bread," He continued, "but the Living Bread, and as all that is living communicates life, so whoever eats this only true Bread of Heaven—whoever believes in me—shall live for ever. As the Living Bread I will give myself—my flesh—that is, my life—for the life of the world."

He pointed thus—in language which His hearers could have readily understood, had their minds not been blinded by opposite preconceptions—to His death, as the "Lamb of God," for mankind. This, He implied, must, above all, be received, to secure everlasting life, for so, only, could His claims and authority be felt. He would give His life for the spiritual life of men, as bread is given for their bodily life: the one to be taken by the soul, the other by the body.

The idea of eating, as a metaphor for receiving spiritual benefit, was familiar to Christ's hearers, and was as readily understood as our expressions, "devouring a book," or "drinking in" instruction. In Isaiah iii. 1, the words "the whole stay of bread," were explained by the Rabbis as referring to their own teaching,[24] and they laid it down as a rule, that wherever, in Ecclesiastes, allusion was made to food or drink, it meant study of the Law, and the practice of good works.[25] It was a saying among them—"In the time of the Messiah the Israelites will be fed by Him."[26] Nothing was more common in the schools and synagogues than the phrases of eating and drinking, in a metaphorical sense. "Messiah is not likely to come to Israel," said Hillel, "for they have already eaten Him"—that is, greedily received His words[27]—"in the days of Hezekiah." A current conventionalism in the synagogues was that the just would "eat the Shekinah." It was peculiar to the Jews to be taught in such metaphorical language. Their Rabbis never spoke in plain words, and it is expressly said that Jesus submitted to

[24] Chagiga, fol. 14. 1.

[25] Midrash, Koheleth, fol. 88, c. 4.

[26] Sanhedrim, fol. 98, c. 2.

[27] Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. iii. 309.

CHAP. XLIV. the popular taste, for "without a parable spake He not unto them."[28]

28 Mark 5. 34.

But nothing blinds the mind so much as preconceived ideas, and dreams of national glory had so inseparably associated themselves with their conception of the Messiah, that a figure, which in other cases would have created no difficulty, led to violent discussion, some contending for the literal sense, which they held as a self-contradiction, others favouring a metaphorical explanation.[c]

Instead, however, of answering the eager questions which now rose, how this could be, Jesus, resolved to break finally with the gross outward ideas of His kingdom which prevailed, only proceeded to carry out the paradox farther, by adding that they must not only eat His flesh, but drink His blood—thus intimating still more clearly His violent death and its mysterious virtue for the salvation of mankind, as He was hereafter to do still more vividly by the abiding symbols of the Last Supper. On no other condition than by making the lessons and merits of that death their own could they have eternal life, or be raised up at the last day. Without this they were spiritually dead. His flesh and blood were true spiritual food; the heavenly bread of the soul; the nourishment of the divine life within. The hearty recognition and reception of this great truth would create an abiding and intimate communion between Him and those who thus, as it were, fed on Him as their inner life. Living in Him, He would live and reign in them. Nay, as a further result of this intimate spiritual union—this oneness of will and heart with Him, divine life would go forth from Him to those in whom He found it, as it came forth to Himself from the Father. Then, with a repetition of the original figure of His being the bread that came down from heaven; not the manna, of which those who ate were long since dead; but the bread, to eat which gave eternal life, He closed His address.

The Baptist had spoken of the fan in the hand of his great successor: this discourse was the realization of the figure. Those who had hoped to find a popular political leader in Him saw their dreams melt away: those who had no true sympathy

for His life and words had an excuse for leaving Him. None who were not bound to Him by sincere loyalty and devotion had any longer a motive for following Him. Fierce patriotism burning for insurrection, mean self-interest seeking worldly advantage, and vulgar curiosity craving excitement, were equally disappointed. It was the first vivid instance of "the offence of the Cross"—henceforth to become the special stumbling-block of the nation.[29] The wishes and hopes of the crowds who had called themselves disciples had proved self-deceptions. They expected from the Messiah quite other favours than the identity of spiritual nature symbolized by the eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The bloody death implied in the metaphor was in direct contradiction to all their ideas. A lowly and suffering Messiah thus unmistakably set before them was revolting to their national pride and gross material tastes. "We have heard out of the Law," said some, a little later, "that the Christ abideth for ever, and how sayest thou the Son of man must be 'lifted up,'[30]—that is, crucified?" "That be far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee," said even Peter almost at the last, when he heard from his Master's lips of the Cross, so near at hand.[31] The Messiah of popular conception would use force to establish His kingdom, but Jesus, while claiming the Messiahship, spoke only of self-sacrifice. Outward glory and material wealth were the national dream: He spoke only of inward purity. If He would not head them with Almighty power, to get Judea for the Jews, they would not have Him. Their idea of the kingdom of God was the exact opposite of His.

[29] 1 Cor. 1. 23 Gal. 5. 11.

[30] John 12. 34

[31] Matt. 16. 22.

The discourse had been interrupted in its progress, and, now, at its close, the murmuring and whispering grew more earnest than ever. "This is a hard saying," was the general feeling, "who can bear it?" "No one could submit to such self-denial," said one. "I don't understand it," said another. "Blasphemy," said a third. "He claims to be God." "He is not the Messiah for me," said a fourth.[d] Jesus, now on His way out of the synagogue, noticed all. "Does what I have said offend you?" said He. "If, now, while I am with you, you think my words hard, and stumble at them, what

will you say when I tell you that when I have returned to heaven, whence I came, you will still have to eat my flesh and drink my blood, to become, through me, partakers of eternal life? Do you not see from this that I speak in metaphor, and that you are not to take my words literally, but in their spirit and inner meaning? It is not my flesh you are to eat, but my words, which you have just heard. These you must receive into your hearts, and they will quicken you into spiritual life, for they are spirit and life. If you do not believe on me as the true Messiah, by His death the life of the world—but expect only a national salvation from my visible bodily presence—as one who will live on earth for ever, and reign in deathless splendour—you must find what I have said an offence. But he who desires from me, as the Messiah, only the hidden life of the soul, its renewal in the holy image of God, and His reign within, will find no offence in any of my words. The truths I have told you are spirit and life, and quicken the soul that receives them into a heavenly life as bread quickens the body. My mere outward natural life, as such, profits you nothing. If my words have been hard to any, it is because they do not believe in me, for only the believing heart can realize their truth."

In the Sermon on the Mount, which inaugurated His public ministry, Jesus had contrasted the theocratic forms of pupilage and the letter, with the Law of the New Kingdom; a law of the spirit and liberty. In this address to the people He contrasted with the theocratic life in its mere outwardness and its slavery to forms, the new life from God which He made known—a life kindled and maintained by the Spirit from above—the gift of the Heavenly Father. The dead letter; the outward material flesh; He told them, profited nothing: the form, the rite, the dogma, the institution, however venerable in itself—even His own flesh, as the symbol of mere material life, had no magic virtue. Only the inward essence, the truth embodied, the living principle, the quickening spirit received into the heart, availed with God, or sustained the heavenly life in the soul. The life-giving Spirit as it flows from the infinite fulness of God, and

reproduces itself in the heart, was the true manna of humanity in the wilderness of the world.

The false enthusiasm which had hitherto gathered the masses round Jesus was henceforth at an end, now that their worldly hopes of Him as the Messiah were exploded. His discourse had finally undeceived them. He was founding a mysterious spiritual kingdom: they only cared for a kingdom of this world. It became for the first time clear that no worldly rewards or honours were to be had by following Him, but only spiritual gifts and benefits, for which most of them cared nothing. They wanted to see wonders, to eat bread from heaven that would protect them from dying, and to get places and wealth in the new kingdom when finally set up. They had looked on Jesus as a miracle-worker rather than a spiritual Saviour, and wished to be healed rather by touching His garments than by sympathy and communion with His Spirit. But He had come to save sinners, not to work miracles, even of healing: to be a physician of souls, not of bodies. He had disenchanted the insincere and selfish who had hitherto flocked after Him, and they forthwith showed their altered feelings. From the moment[e] of this address, the crowds that had thronged Him began to disappear, returning to their homes, doubtless in angry disappointment. It seemed as if He would be entirely forsaken. Could it be that even the Twelve would leave Him? He knew them too thoroughly to look for any answer but an earnest assurance of their loyalty. Yet it was well to put them to the test, and strengthen their faith by trying it. "Do you, also, wish to leave me?" asked He. "To whom, Lord, shall we go away?" answered Peter, ever the first to speak,—"Thou hast words of eternal life, and we[f] have believed and known that Thou art the Holy One of God." But even in the Twelve, as Jesus knew, the fan had chaff to separate from the wheat. "Did not I myself choose you Twelve to be specially my own, and one (even) of *you* is a devil? Beware of self-confidence. If you think you stand, take heed lest you fall!" Eleven, as we know, refused to leave Him. Did the first thought of treachery rise in the mind of Judas with the blasting of worldly hopes entertained, almost

CHAP. XLIV. unconsciously, till now? His Master had never before spoken so plainly. Henceforth, to follow Him clearly meant to give up all worldly aims or prospects, and voluntarily choose a life, and it might be a death, of self-denial and self-sacrifice for the nation and the world—or act the hypocrite with a faint hope of ulterior advantage.

Jesus had not gone to the Passover, for it would have been unsafe to have shown Himself in Jerusalem.[32] His disciples, however, doubtless went up, for no Jew neglected to do so if possible.[33] He had now been publicly teaching for some months over a year in Galilee, and had not revisited Judea, except for a few days at the Passover[34] before, since His first discouraging circuit[35] in the south. The north had received Him with a warmth and frankness that had won His heart by the contrast with the cold self-righteous bigotry of Judea. It had given him the Twelve, and the ready audience He had found had enabled Him to make a small but healthy beginning of the New Kingdom. The impulsive, excitable Galilæans seemed for a time, indeed, likely, almost as a whole, to leave the Rabbis for His new teaching. But the movement had been checked, and the popular favour chilled by the restless efforts of the party threatened. Weak in the north, they had sent word to Jerusalem of the success of the Teacher from Nazareth, whom the orthodoxy of Judea had refused to follow. The Rabbis of the capital—known variously as "the Pharisees," "Scribes," or Sopherim,—"lawyers,"—"masters of the traditions"—"Hakamin" or wise men, —"doctors,"—"expounders of the Law,"—and "disputers" of the Gospels and the Epistles; and the official ecclesiastical world at large—the priests, canonists, and preachers of Judaism, had their stronghold in the Temple courts, and rivalled the bigotry of the more modern Mollahs and Softas of Mecca and Medina. At the first hint of danger, a deputation had been sent to Capernaum, but they had failed to carry the people with them in their attempts to fix charges on the new Teacher. He had defended Himself so dexterously against their allegations of Sabbath-breaking and blasphemy, that for the time they retired discomfited. Fresh news from the north, however, had again roused them.

[32] John 7. 1. Matt. 15. 1—20. Mark 7. 1—23.
[33] Pressel, Leben Jesu, 145.
[34] John 5. 1.
[35] John 3. 32.

More Rabbis appeared, sent by the authorities in Jerusalem, to see if the rash Innovator could not be crushed, and their presence speedily led to a further conflict.



In the training of the Twelve for their future work it was necessary, above all things, to create and foster the conception of moral freedom; for the central point in the contrast between the New Kingdom and the Old Theocracy was its liberty, as opposed to the bondage to the letter that had prevailed. The deep and pure religiousness Christ demanded could only flourish where the conscience was quickened, and made responsible by a sense of perfect spiritual freedom. He had already announced this great principle in the Sermon on the Mount. The Twelve had been disciplined in it by their mission journeys, but new illustrations showed, day by day, how hard it was for them to emancipate themselves from hereditary prejudices, and from Rabbinical authority.

The very foundation of the new Society was in itself a breaking away from the established Theocracy, and it necessarily led to continually more decisive acts of independence and separation. The Jewish theologians of the Pharisaic party, with their pedantic devotion to precedent and form, and their claim to direct the conscience of the people, had to a great extent produced a mere outward religionism which had weakened the moral sense of the nation, and withered up all aspirations for spiritual manhood and liberty of thought. They were very popular as the reverend and zealous defenders of the holy Law handed down from the Fathers, almost from the first. They had recognized in Jesus, still more than in His hated and feared predecessor, the Baptist, a deadly foe, and the success of the new teaching in Galilee imperilled their influence if it remained unchecked. With keen foresight they had sought to anticipate the danger, but hitherto had failed so ignominiously, that they had for some time past refrained from open attack, contenting themselves with a secret hostility of dark hints, suspicions, and blasphemies, to poison the minds of the people. Till now, however, Jesus had made no direct attack on them, but, while watched and assailed, had kept strictly on the defensive.

CHAP. XLIV.

Henceforth, He took a different course. To expose their innuendoes and calumnies was no longer enough. He felt constrained, for the future, to show that not He but His accusers were really obnoxious to the charges made against Him so recklessly; that not He but they were leading the people from the right way, and acting under unholy influence, and that *their* zeal for God was blind, not His.

A new attack by them led to this change. Reports of the popular readiness to accept Him as Messianic King, and of His resolute refusal to head such a political movement, which alone could meet their own wishes, had doubtless reached Jerusalem, and this, coupled with rumours of His innovations and independence as a religious reformer, had thoroughly alarmed the authorities at Jerusalem. Discarding invective, craft, or indirect approach, their deputies now came, no longer to the disciples, but to Himself, with specific complaints, which the freedom of Eastern manners, permitting free access to private life, had enabled them to establish. The disciples had already given offence by plucking and rubbing ears of barley on the Sabbath, and thus, as it was held, reaping and threshing on the sacred day; but a still graver scandal in Pharisaic eyes had been detected in their sitting down to eat without ceremonially washing their hands. The Law of Moses required purifications in certain cases, but the Rabbis had perverted the spirit of Leviticus in this, as in other things, for they taught that food and drink could not be taken with a good conscience when there was the possibility of ceremonial defilement. If every conceivable precaution had not been taken, the person or the vessel used might have contracted impurity, which would thus be conveyed to the food, and through the food to the body, and by it to the soul. Hence it had been long a custom, and latterly a strict law, that before every meal not only the hands but even the dishes, couches, and tables should be scrupulously washed.

The legal washing of the hands before eating was especially sacred to the Rabbinist; not to do so was a crime as great as to eat the flesh of swine. "He who neglects hand-washing," says the book Sohar,[36] "deserves to be punished here and hereafter."

[36] Gen. f. 60. 2. Num. f. 100. 3 Deut. f. 107. 2

"He is to be destroyed out of the world, for in hand-washing is contained the secret of the ten commandments." "He is guilty of death." "Three sins bring poverty after them," says the Mischna,[37] "and to slight hand-washing is one." "He who eats bread without hand-washing," says Rabbi Jose, "is as if he went in to a harlot." The later Schulchan Aruch, enumerates twenty-six rules for this rite in the morning alone. "It is better to go four miles to water than to incur guilt by neglecting hand-washing," says the Talmud.[38] "He who does not wash his hands after eating," it says, "is as bad as a murderer."[39] The devil Schibta sits on unwashed hands and on the bread.[40] It was a special mark of the Pharisees that "they ate their daily bread with due purification," and to neglect doing so was to be despised as unclean.

[37] Sabbath, 62.1

[38] Cal'a, f. 58. 3.

[39] Tanchuma, f. 73. 2.

[40] Joma, f. 77. 2 Gloss.

Rabbinism was now in its highest glory, for the great teachers Hillel and Schammai, who were hardly a generation dead, had developed it to the uttermost. They had disputed so fiercely, indeed, on many trifling details, that it was often said that Elias himself, when he came, would hardly be able to decide between them. But they agreed respecting hand-washing, so that the Talmud maintains that "any one living in the land of Israel, eating his daily food in purification, speaking the Hebrew of the day, and morning and evening praying duly with the phylacteries, is certain that he will eat bread in the kingdom of God."[41]

[41] Sabbath, f. 3. 4.

It was laid down that the hands were first to be washed clean. The tips of the ten fingers were then joined and lifted up so that the water ran down to the elbows, then turned down so that it might run off to the ground. Fresh water was poured on them as they were lifted up, and twice again as they hung down. The washing itself was to be done by rubbing the fist of one hand in the hollow of the other.[42] When the hands were washed before eating they must be held upwards; when after it, downwards, but so that the water should not run beyond the knuckles.[43] The vessel used must be held first in the right, then in the left hand; the water was to be poured first on the right, then on the left hand, and at every third time the words repeated

[42] Godwyn, 39. Meyer, Markus, vii. 3

[43] Sepp, iv. 97.

CHAP. XLIV.

"Blessed art Thou who hast given us the command to wash the hands." It was keenly disputed whether the cup of blessing or the hand-washing should come first; whether the towel used should be laid on the table or on the couch; and whether the table was to be cleared before the final washing or after it.[44]

[44] Serp, iv. 97.

This anxious trifling over the infinitely little was, however, only part of a system. If a Pharisee proposed to eat common food, it was enough that the hands were washed by water poured on them. Before eating Terumah—the holy tithes and the shew-bread—they must be dipped completely in the water, and before the portions of the holy offerings could be tasted, a bath must be taken. Hand-washing before prayer, or touching anything in the morning, was as rigidly observed, for evil spirits might have defiled the hands in the night. To touch the mouth, nose, ear, eyes, or the one hand with the other, before the rite, was to incur the risk of disease in the part touched. The occasions that demanded the observance were countless: it must be done even after cutting the nails, or killing a flea.[45] The more water used, the more piety. "He who uses abundant water for hand-washing," says R. Chasda, "will have abundant riches." If one had not been out it was enough to pour water on the hands; but one coming in from without needed to plunge his hands into the water, for he knew not what uncleanness might have been near him while in the streets, and this plunging could not be done except in a spot where there were not less than sixty gallons of water.[46] [g]

[45] Herzog, Reinigungen, xii. 639.

[46] Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ii. 418.

The same scrupulous, superstitious minuteness extended to possible defilements of all the household details of daily life. Dishes, hollow or flat, of whatever material, knives, tables, and couches, were constantly subjected to purifications, lest they should have contracted any Levitical defilement by being used by some one unclean.

This ritual exaggeration was, apparently, a result of the jealousy between the democratic Pharisees and the lordly Sadducees. The latter attached supreme importance to the ceremonial sanctity of the officiating priests, to exalt themselves as the clerical aristocracy. The Phari-

sees, to humble them, laid the stress, as far as possible, on the vessels used, and the exactness of the act. In keeping with their endless washings in private, they demanded that all the vessels of the Temple itself should be purified after each feast, lest some unclean person might have defiled them—a refinement which drew down on a Pharisee who was carrying out even the golden candlestick itself to wash it, after a feast, the mocking gibe from a Sadducee, that he expected before long the Pharisees would give the sun a washing.[47]

[47] Derenbourg, 132—134.

The authority for this endless, mechanical religionism was the commands or "traditions" of the Fathers, handed down from the days of the Great Synagogue, but ascribed with pious exaggeration to the Almighty, who, it was said, had delivered them orally to Moses on Mount Sinai. Interpretations, expositions, and discussions of all kinds were based, not only on every separate word, or on every letter, but even on every comma and semicolon, to create new laws and observances, and where these were not enough, oral traditions, said to have been delivered by God to Moses on Sinai, were invented to justify new refinements. These "traditions" were constantly increased, and formed a New Law, which passed from mouth to mouth, and from generation to generation, till, at last, public schools rose for its study and development, of which the most famous were those of Hillel and Schammai, in the generation before Jesus, and even, perhaps, in His early childhood. In His lifetime it was still a fundamental rule that they should not be committed to writing. It was left to Rabbi Judah, the Holy, to commence the collection and formal engrossing of the almost countless fragments of which it consisted, and from his weary labour ultimately rose the huge folios of the Talmud.[48]

[48] Cohen, 157, 158. Schürer, 36. Hurwitz, Die Sagen der Ebräer, ix.

As in the case of the Brahminical theocracy of India, that of Judea attached more importance to the ceremonial precepts of its schools than to the sacred text on which they were based. Wherever Scripture and Tradition seemed opposed, the latter was treated as the higher authority. Pharisaism openly proclaimed this, and set itself, as the

CHAP. XLIV.

Gospel expresses it, in the chair of Moses,[49] displacing the great lawgiver. "It is a greater offence," says the Mischna, "to teach anything contrary to the voice of the Rabbis, than to contradict Scripture itself. He who says, contrary to Scripture, 'It is not lawful to wear the Tephillin'"—the little leather boxes containing texts of Scripture, bound, during prayer, on the forehead and on the arm—"is not to be punished as a troubler. But he who says there should be five divisions in the Totaphoth"—another name for the Tephillin, or phylacteries[50]—"and thus teaches differently from the Rabbis, is guilty."[51] "He who expounds the Scriptures in opposition to the Tradition," says R. Eleazar, "has no share in the world to come." The mass of Rabbinical prescriptions—not the Scripture—was regarded as the basis of religion, "for the Covenant of God was declared to have been made with Israel on account of the oral Law, as it is written, 'After the tenor of these *words* I have made a covenant,' &c.[52] For God knew that, in after ages, Israel would be carried away among strange people, who would copy off the written Law, and, therefore, He gave them the oral Law, that His will might be kept secret among themselves."[53] Those who gave themselves to the knowledge of the Traditions "saw a great light,"[54] for God enlightened their eyes, and showed them how they ought to act in relation to lawful and unlawful things, clean and unclean, which are not told thus fully and clearly in Scripture. It was, perhaps, good to give one's self to the reading of the Scripture, but he who reads diligently the Traditions receives a reward from God, and he who gives himself to the Commentaries on these traditions has the greatest reward of all.[55] "The Bible was like water, the Traditions like wine, the Commentaries on them like spiced wine." "My son," says the Talmud, "give more heed to the words of the Rabbis than to the words of the Law."[56] So exactly alike is Ultramontanism in every age, and in all religions!

Jesus had no sympathy with a system which thus ignored conscience, and found the essence of religion in the slavery of outward forms. The New Kingdom was in the heart; in the loving sonship of the Father in Heaven, and all outward

[49] Matt. 23. 2.

[50] Buxtorf, Lex. *sub voc.*

[51] Sanhedrim, xi. 3. Jost, Geschichte d. Judenthums, i. 93. Gfrörer, Jahrhundert, &c., i. 146—153. Eisenmenger, i. 329. Buxtorfi Synagoga Judaica, 62—65.

[52] Exod. 34. 27.

[53] Ammude golah, in Buxtorfi Syn. Jud. 63.

[54] Isaiah 9. 1.

[55] Eisenmenger, i. 329. Buxtorfi Syn. Jud. 65.

[56] Eisenmenger, 330.

observances had value only as expressions of this tender relationship. The Pharisees had refined the Law into a microscopic casuistry which prescribed for every isolated act, but Jesus brought it into the compass of a living principle in the soul. From the outer particular requirement, He passed to the spirit it was intended to express. Special enactments were suffered to fall aside, if the vital idea they embodied were honoured. A lifetime was hardly enough to learn the Rabbinical precepts respecting offerings, but Jesus virtually abrogated them all by the short utterance that "mercy was better than sacrifice." [57] The schools had added to the simple distinctions of the Law between clean and unclean beasts, endless distinctions respecting different parts of each, and the necessary rites; the simple rule of Jesus was—It is not what enters the mouth that defiles a man, but what comes from the heart.[58] The Rabbis contended after what uses vessels should be purified in running, after what in drawn water, and how wooden and metal dishes were to be minutely discriminated. Jesus waived aside this trifling and deadly pedantry, and told His hearers to take care to have what was within clean, and then the outside would be clean also.[59] Even the Sabbath laws, with their countless enactments, were as briefly condensed. "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day." "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." [60] Such teaching was unheard of in Israel. In was revolutionary in the grandest sense.

57 Matt. 9. 13; 12. 7.

58 Matt. 15. 11 Mark 7. 15.

59 Luke 11 37

60 Mark 2. 27.

The deputation of Rabbis now sent to Capernaum were determined to bring matters to a crisis. Their spies, and, perhaps, themselves, had carefully gathered evidence whether Jesus and His disciples observed the traditions, and carried them out with the minuteness of a recognized religious duty; whether He and they dipped their hands duly before eating; whether they held them up or down in doing so; whether they wetted them to the elbows or to the knuckles, or wetted only the finger-tips, as the school of Schammai prescribed for certain cases; and they had found, to their horror, that neither He nor His disciples washed their hands thus ceremonially at all. The next Passover would show how

CHAP. XLIV.

formally they had laid their information against Him, before the Sanhedrim, with its leaders, the high priest Caiaphas and the powerful Hannas, for such independence and audacity.

Meanwhile, their demand for an explanation gave Jesus the desired opportunity to break, finally, with their whole party. A casuistry worthy of Suarez or Escobar, had sapped the fundamental principles of morality in the name of religion. With a keen eye to the interests of their caste, the Rabbis had trifled with the subject of oaths and vows in such a way that the treasury of the Temple was not only sacred from all public appeals, but was continually enriched by money, which ought, rightfully, to have gone to the support of families and relations, and even of aged or poor parents. The utterance of the word "Corban" [h]—"I have vowed it to sacred uses"—sequestrated anything, absolutely and irreversibly, to the Temple. It might be spoken under the influence of death-bed terror, or in the weakness of superstitious fear, but if once uttered, the Church threw round the money or property thus secured the impassable barrier of her ghostly claims.

To honour one's parents was one of the "Ten Words" of Sinai, and no duty was held more sacred by a Jew unperverted by Rabbinical sophistry. It was not forgotten that it was the one commandment to which a promise of reward was attached. "A child is bound to maintain his parents when old and helpless," says one passage in the Talmud, "even if he have to beg to do so." But this, unfortunately, was not the uniform teaching of Christ's day. If one Rabbi had put filial duty before the right to vow for one's own advantage, others had taught that it was a duty to honour God before honouring human relationships [61]—a smooth phrase for legalizing gifts to the Church at the expense even of father and mother. The hierarchical party ignored all interests but their own, and subordinated natural duty to their own enrichment. Pharisaism, in its moral decay, had come to be a spiritual death, corrupting the springs of national life. A few years later, in the time of the great famine of the year A.D. 45, under Claudius, the theocratic

[a] Nedarim, f. 64. col. 1.

party so heartlessly cared for themselves, that while the people were perishing of hunger by hundreds, no remission of Temple dues was permitted, and the Passover alone saw forty-one attic bushels of wheat presented at the altar, to be presently removed for the use of the priests, though the issarion—a measure of three and a half pints[62]—sold for four drachmas,[63] a sum equal to about twenty-six shillings at the present value of money.[64] Josephus, indeed, boasts that no priest ate a crumb of the grain thus relentlessly hoarded, but when even a high priest was known as "the disciple of gluttons," rioting in great feasts on the sacrifices and wine of the altar,[65] the mass of his order would not be fastidious about the wheat and the bread.

[62] Dict. of Antiquities, *Table*. Dict. of Bible "Weights," &c.
[63] Jos. Ant. iii. 15. 3.
[64] Davidson's New Test. *Table*.
[65] Talmud; quoted in Derenbourg, 234.

Matt. 15. 1—20.
Mark 7. 1—23

Representatives of this smooth hypocrisy had now gathered round Jesus, and proceeded to inquire into His alleged unlawful acts. "How comes it," asked they, "that a teacher who claims a higher sanctity than others can quietly permit His disciples to neglect a custom imposed by our wise forefathers, and so carefully observed by every pious Israelite? How is it that they do not wash their hands before eating?"

"They neglect only a ceremony introduced by men," retorted Jesus; "but how comes it that you, who know the Law, transgress commands which are not of man, but from God Himself? How comes it that, for the sake of traditions invented by the Rabbis, you set aside the most explicit commands of God? He has, for example, said that we must honour our father and mother, and support and care for them in old age.[i] He has declared it worthy of death for any one to deny his parents due reverence, or to treat them harshly or with neglect. But you have invented a doctrine which absolves children, in many cases, from this commandment. 'If any one,' says your 'tradition,' 'is asked by his parents for a gift, or help, for their benefit, he has only to say that he has vowed that very part of his means to the Temple, and they cannot press him further to contribute to their support.' How cunningly have you thus circumvented God's law! How easy is it for any one to break it, and affect a zeal for religion in doing so!

"Ye hypocrites!—acting religion"—now for the first time

CHAP. XLIV. thus denouncing them and their party—"well has Isaiah painted you when he introduces God as saying, 'This nation has its worship in words, and its religion is of the lips, while its heart is far from me. Their service of me is worthless, for it is not my Law, but only human invention.'[66] These words describe you to the letter. You put aside what God has commanded, and has enforced by promises and threats, and yet keep, superstitiously, 'traditions' which only custom, and homage to human teachers, have introduced. Of this kind are your hand-washings, and many similar usages."

Isaiah 29. 13.

Such a defence was an open declaration of war against Pharisaism, and the hierarchy closely indentified with it. His words struck at the insincerity and false-heartedness of the party as a whole, at its fundamental principles, its practice, its modes of thought, its whole ideas and aims. They are pious, very pious, He tells them, in outward seeming. They keep the traditions fastidiously, but their piety is from the lips, not the heart; obedience to the Rabbis, not God. They wash pots and cups, and care for gifts, as their religion, and ignore the commands of Jehovah. No irony could be more keen or annihilating. What flames of rage must it have kindled in the hearts of the great party so mortally assailed! They could not challenge His loyalty to the higher law, for He spoke as its Champion, against their human additions and perversions. They could not but feel that, far from destroying either the Law or the Prophets, He was ennobling and exalting them. But the very light He poured on the oracles of God showed so much the more the worthlessness of their cherished system, and their misconception of their office as the teachers of the people. He had virtually condemned not only their setting washings above duty to parents; He had denounced them for laying more stress on the Temple worship and ritual than on such filial piety. Hence washings, sacrifices, alms, and fasts; all the loved boastful, pretentious worship and outward practice on which they rested, were of no value compared with the great eternal commands of God, and were even crimes and impiety, when they proudly set themselves in their room.

He arraigned Pharisaism, the dominant orthodoxy, as a whole. The system, so famous, so arrogant, so intensely Jewish, was only an invention of man; a subversion of the Law it claimed to represent, an antagonism to the prophets as well as to Moses, the spiritual ruin of the nation!

The die was finally cast. All that it involved had been long weighed, but He who had come into the world to witness to the Truth could let no prudent regard for self restrain His testimony. It was vital that the people who followed the Rabbis and priests should know what the religion and morals thus taught by them were worth. The truth could not find open ears while men's hearts were misled and prejudiced by such instructors. No one would seek inward renewal who had been taught to care only for externals, and to ignore the sin and corruption within. Pharisaism was a creed of moral cosmetics and religious masks, as all ritual systems must ever be. With Jesus the only true religion was purity of heart and absolute sincerity to truth. Leaving the Rabbis, therefore, and calling round Him the crowd which was lingering near, He proclaimed aloud the great principle He had laid down—"Hear me, all of you,' cried He, "and understand. There is nothing from without the man that, entering into him, can defile him; but the things which come out of the man are those that defile him." Words clear enough to us, perhaps, but grand beyond thought when uttered, for they were the knell of caste—heard now, for the first time, in the history of the world; of national divisions and hatreds, and of the religious worth of external observances, as such, and the inauguration of a universal religion of spirit and truth! Nothing external, they proclaimed, made clean or unclean, holy or unholy. Purity and impurity were words applicable only to the soul and its utterances and acts. The Charter of spiritual religion: the abrogation of the supremacy of forms and formula for ever, was at last proclaimed; the leaven of religious freedom cast into the life of humanity, in the end, to leaven it throughout!

Even the disciples were alarmed at an attitude so revolutionary. In common with the nation at large, they looked

CHAP. XLIV.

on the Rabbis with a superstitious reverence, and now hastened to tell Jesus how deeply the whole class was offended by His words. It was hard for simple Galilæan peasants to break away from hereditary habits of thought. But Christ's answer was ready. "Every plant which my Heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted out. Leave them: they are blind leaders of the blind, and, as such, both they and their followers must stumble on to destruction!"[67] The plants of human, not divine planting, were the "traditions" and "commandments of men"—the "hedge of the Law," in which the Rabbis gloried. Henceforth, there was a breach for ever between the men of the Schools and the New Kingdom.

[67] Matt. 15. 13

But the mind is slow to realize great spiritual truths. To the disciples, their Master's words were dark and strange, demanding explanation. Nor was it possible, either then, or even to the very last, to familiarize them with the new ideas they involved, or free them from the influence of past modes of thought. The tendency to regard the external and formal as a vital and leading characteristic of religion, was well-nigh unconquerable, in minds habituated to Jewish conceptions. An earnest request of Peter, for further explanation, only drew forth an amplification of what had been already said. The evil in man was traced directly to the thoughts; but to eat with unwashed hands, it was repeated, made a man in no way "common" or polluted, as alleged by the Pharisees. Yet the truth had to lie long in the breasts of the Twelve before it wrought their spiritual emancipation from the slavery of the past. The natural and eternal distinction of good and evil was proclaimed, after having been obscured for ages by an artificial morality, but to fully unlearn inveterate prejudice would require the lapse of generations.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### THE COASTS OF THE HEATHEN.

JESUS had now, apparently, been two years before the world as a religious teacher, and had had the usual lot of those who seek to reform entrenched and prosperous abuses. A brief and dazzling popularity had roused the bitter hostility of threatened interests, and they had at last banded together for His destruction. For months past He had seen the death-clouds gathering ever more threateningly over Him, and had devoted Himself with calm anticipation of the end, to the task of training the Twelve to continue His work when He had perished. He had taken the utmost care to avoid open collision with His enemies, and to confine Himself to the instruction of the little circle round Him; but the priests and Rabbis had been quick to see in this very quiet and retirement their greatest danger, for open conflict might destroy what peaceful seclusion would give opportunity to take root. "The world," as He Himself expressed it, "hated Him, because He witnessed of it that its works were evil."[1] Not only His formal accusations and the spirit of His teaching, but His whole life and actions, and even His gentlest words, arraigned things as they were.

CHAP. XLV.

Rumours of possible action against Him by Antipas increased the difficulty of the situation. Every one knew that He and many of His followers had come from the school of the Baptist, whom Antipas had just murdered, and it was evident that His aim was more or less similar to John's, though His acts were more wonderful. Hence speculation was rife respecting Him. Was He the promised Elias? or, at least, Jeremiah, risen from the dead? or was He some special prophet sent from God?[2] Many, indeed, were

[1] John 7. 7.

[2] Mark 6. 15; 8. 28. Matt. 16. 14.

questioning if He might not even be the Messiah, and were willing to accept Him as such, if He would only head a national revolt, in alliance with the Rabbis and priests, against the Romans. To Antipas His appearance was doubly alarming, for it seemed as if the fancied revolutionary movement of John had broken out afresh more fiercely than ever, and superstition, working in an uneasy conscience, easily saw in Him a resurrection of the murdered Baptist, endowed, now, with the awful power of the eternal world from which he had returned. A second murder seemed needed to make the first effective, and to avoid this additional danger Jesus for a time sought concealment.

But the craft and violence of the half-heathen Antipas, was a slight evil compared with the hatred which glowed ever more intensely in the breasts of the Rabbis and priests of Jerusalem, and in those of the Pharisees, and other disciples of the schools, scattered over the country. The demands of Jesus were far beyond the mere summons of the Baptist, to prepare for a new and better time. He required immediate submission to a new Theocracy. He excited the fury of the dominant party, not like the Baptist, by isolated bursts of denunciation, but by working quietly, as a King in His own kingdom, which, while in the world, was something far higher. Hence, the feeling against Him was very different from the partial, cautious, and intermittent hatred of the Baptist. The hierarchy and the Rabbis, as the centre of that which, with all its corruptions, was the only true religion on earth as yet, felt themselves compromised directly and fatally by Him, and could not maintain themselves as they were, if He were tolerated. The whole spiritual power of Israel was thus arrayed against Him; a force slowly created by the possession, for ages, of the grandest religious truths known to the ancient world, and by the pride of a long and incomparably sublime national history. It had been assailed in the past, at long intervals, from without, but in recent years it had been for the first time attacked from within, by the Baptist, and now felt itself still more dangerously assaulted by this Galilæan. To crush such an apparently insignificant opponent—a peasant of Nazareth,

rising, singly and unsupported, against a power so colossal—seemed easy; nor could it be fancied more difficult to scatter and destroy His small band of followers, as yet, mostly, despised peasants.

The first official step towards the repression of the new movement had, apparently, been already taken, on the occasion of the last visit of Jesus to Jerusalem. His cure of the blind man on the Sabbath, had then brought down on Him the warning punishment of the lesser excommunication, which entailed formal exclusion from the synagogues of Judea,[3] and was all they dared as yet inflict. In consequence of it, He had never returned to the south, but confined Himself to the north, where the synagogues were still open to Him. The same sentence seems now to have been gradually extended to the synagogues of Galilee, for we cease to read of His entering them or teaching in them. But as this measure evidently failed, spies were let loose on Him, to dog His steps constantly, and find ground for fresh charges, even by invading the privacy of His home life.

[3] John 7. 1; 13. 21; 9. 22, 34; 12. 42. Ewald's Christus, 384.

This deadly hatred, with all that it involved in the future, had been foreseen from the first, and His utmost care, His seclusion, and His innocence, had only delayed the crisis that had now come. The foundation of His new kingdom on a firm basis, by the choice and preparation of the Twelve, had, however, lightened the thought of it, and neutralized its worst consequences. Yet it was still necessary to ward off the catastrophe as long as possible, in order to advance the great work of building up, as far as might be, the infant society He had established; for it was slow work to ripen vigorous faith and adequate spirituality, even in those under His personal influence. But the growing hatred and ill-will of His enemies made lengthened residence in any one place henceforth undesirable, and He had from this time to take more frequent, as well as wider circuits, to escape them. Yet there were compensating benefits even in this wandering life, for it made it easier, amidst the many unforeseen incidents of each day, to raise the Twelve to that higher faith and greater steadfastness which yet failed them, and it enabled Him to help many in outlying parts, who were fitted

CHAP. XLV.

to receive good at His hands. The gracious purpose of God was thus leading Him to visit in peace all the chief places of the land, which it was His great mission to summon to enter His kingdom.

One inevitable result was that the nearer the end came, the more necessary was it to make clear to the Twelve the causes of this hatred shown towards Him, and the divine necessity of His approaching death. Hence, He took every opportunity from this time to impress both thoughts more and more clearly on His followers. His warnings against the corruptions of the hierarchical party became more frequent, and constantly keener, until, at last, the Twelve understood, in some measure, the whole situation.[4]

Leaving the shores of the Sea of Galilee, He now turned to the far north, with the Twelve as companions of His flight. His way led Him over the rough uplands towards Safed, with its near view of the snowy summits of Lebanon. Then, leaving Gischala on the right, the road passed through one of the many woody valleys of these highland regions, till, at the distance of two days' journey from the Lake, it reached the slope at the foot of which lay the plains of Tyre. A yellow strip of beach and sand divides the hills from the sea, into which the insular tongue of land on which Tyre was built stretched far.[5] He looked down, perhaps for the first time so closely, on the smoking chimneys of the glass works of Sidon and of the dye works at Tyre; on the long rows of warehouses filled with the merchandise of the world; on the mansions, monuments, public buildings, palaces, and temples of the two cities, and their harbours and moles crowded with shipping. The busy scene before Him was the land of the accursed Canaanite; the seat of the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth, which had of old so often corrupted Israel; a region, with all its wealth and splendour, and surpassing beauty of palm groves, and gardens, and embowering green, so depraved and polluted, that the Hebrew had adopted the name of Beelzebub—one of its idols—as the name for the Prince of Devils. Yet, even here, Jesus felt a pity and charity unknown to His nation, and the great sea beyond,

[4] Ewald's Christus, 449—454.

[5] Hausrath, i. 402.

whitened with wing-like sails, would be like a dream of the future, when distant lands, washed by the waves over which these vessels sped, would gladly receive the message He came to deliver.

Whether He passed into heathen territory is a question. He may only have gone as far as the border of the alien district. The whole region was more or less thickly settled by Jews, drawn by commerce, or through long historic association with the district, which had been assigned to Asshur, though never won by that tribe. So far back as the days of the judges, the population had been half heathen, half Jewish.[6] Kept back, through all their history, from the sea-coast, Israel had come to hate the life of a sailor from which they were thus debarred, and hence were contented to settle amidst the busy traders of Phenicia, without attempting, after the first failure, to dispossess them.[7] No retreat could have promised more safe retirement, but Jesus was now too universally known to remain anywhere undiscovered, for numbers had come to Galilee, even from these very districts, to see and hear Him.

His mission, during His life, had been repeatedly defined by Himself, as only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. That He felt no narrow exclusiveness had been already shown by the incidents of His journey through Samaria, and by the prophetic joy with which He had predicted the entrance of many from the heathen world into His new Society.[8] Even His sympathy with publicans and sinners, and with the outcast sunken multitude, whose ignorance of Rabbinnical precepts was held to mark them as accursed of God, had, in fact, been as distinct protests against Pharisaic bigotry as He could have made even by the formal recognition of heathens as citizens of His new society. And had He not proclaimed the supreme truth that God was the Great Father of all mankind, and that the human race round the world were brethren in His great household? But pity for His own nation—the Israel of the Old Covenant—forbade His going forth, for the time, to all races, with the open invitation to join the new Theocracy. It would at once have sealed the fate of His people, for what was offered to the heathen

[6] Judges 1. 32.

[7] Rosenmüller, i. 324. Sepp, iv. 104. Keim, ii. 407.

[8] Matt. 8. 11; 18. 29.

would, from that very fact, have been instantly rejected by the fanatical Jew.

It was vain for Him to seek rest. A woman of the country, by language a Greek, by nationality a Canaanite, and by residence a Syro-Phenician—for Phenicia was attached to the Roman province of Syria—perhaps a heathen, but, in any case, of an humble religious heart, heard that He was in the neighbourhood.[9] His fame had long before spread so widely, that the wondrous cures He had performed were everywhere known. Among others, this woman had heard of them, and maternal love was quick to turn them to its own unselfish account. She had a daughter "grievously vexed with a devil," and at once came over the border[a] to implore Jesus to have mercy on her child. The half belief that He was the Messiah had spread even to Tyre, and was accepted in her poor unenlightened way by the supplicant. He was abroad with the Twelve when she found Him, and forthwith entreated Him—"Lord, son of David, have mercy on me." She had made her child's trouble her own. Such an incident, at a time when He sought to remain unknown, must have been very disturbing, for it might put His enemies on His track. From whatever cause, He took no notice of her prayers. But she would not be denied, and persistently followed Him with her wailing petitions, as He went along, till the Twelve, filled with harsh Jewish prejudice, and mistaking the reason of their Master's silence, grew indignant at her pertinacity, and begged Him to send her away and stop her crying after them. That a foreigner, and, above all, a Canaanite, accursed of God, should share His mercies, was, as yet, far too liberal a conception for them. Did not the Rabbis teach that the race built their houses in the name of their idols, so that evil spirits came and dwelt in them?[10] and was not Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils, their chief god? The answer of Jesus seemed to favour this bitter exclusiveness—"He was not sent except to the lost sheep of the House of Israel!" They little knew that His help was kept back only in pity for His own nation, whom mercy to abhorred unclean Canaanites would embitter against Him to their own destruction. It was vain, however, to try to weary

[9] Matt. 15. 21—28. Mark 7.24—30. Paulus, Leben Jesu, i. 380. Ewald's Christus, 454. Hess, Leben Jesu, i. 420.

[10] Eisenmenger, i. 522.

out a mother's love. Following Him into the house, though He would fain have remained unknown, she cast herself at His feet and renewed her prayer. To the Twelve she was only a "dog," as the Jews regarded all heathen.[11] Veiling the tenderness of His heart in affected roughness of speech, softened, doubtless, by the trembling sympathy of His voice and His gentle looks, He told her that the children—Israel, the sons of God—must first be fed before others could be noticed. "It is not right," said He, "to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." Then, as now, the traveller, entering or leaving a town or village, had only too much reason to notice the troops of lean, sharp-nosed masterless dogs, which filled the air with their cries as he passed, and no one could sit at a meal without the chance of some of them coming in at the ever-open door to pick up the fragments,[b] always to be found where only the fingers were used at table.

[11] Eisenmenger, i. 715. Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. i. 230. Nork, 75.

With a woman's quickness, and a mother's invincible love, deepened by irrepressible trust in Him whose face and tones so contradicted His words, even this seeming harshness was turned to a resistless appeal. "Yes, Lord," said she, "it is true: still the dogs are allowed to eat the fragments that fall from the children's table." She had conquered. "O woman," said Jesus, "great is thy faith; be it unto thee as thou wilt." His word was enough, and going her way she found, on reaching her house, that her daughter, no longer raving, was perfectly cured, and lay calmly in bed, once more herself.[c] The Twelve had learned, at last, that even heathen "dogs" were not to be sent, unheard, away.

How long Jesus stayed in these parts is unknown. It would seem as if this incident had forced Him to leave sooner than He had proposed. He did not, however, return at once to Capernaum, but set out north-eastwards, through the territory of Sidon, to the country east of Jordan. The Roman road which ran over the richly wooded hills, almost straight eastward, from Tyre to Cæsarea Philippi, was too far to the south. He must have taken the caravan road, which still runs from Sidon on the south side of the mountain stream Bostrenus, climbing the spurs of Lebanon, with their

CHAP. XLV.

woods and noble mountain scenery, till it crosses the range amidst peaks six thousand feet high, at the natural rock-bridge over the deep, rushing Leontes. Turning, now, down the valley of the Upper Jordan, under the shadow of the Hermon range, rising 9,500 feet high in their highest peak, He, erelong, at Cæsarea Philippi, reached the open country, with a wide view of the broad reedy marshes of Ulatha and Merom, the hills of Galilee, and the wide uplands of Gaulonitis. How long He spent on the journey is not told. Perhaps He stopped by the way, for Lebanon was full then, as now, of villages; perhaps He only passed through them on His way. His final purpose by this wide circuit, was to reach His old haunts without passing through Galilee, and this brought Him, apparently for the first time, to the wide territory of the ten allied free cities—the Decapolis.

These cities were simply places which the Jews had not succeeded in re-conquering, after their return from Babylon. They had thus remained in the hands of the heathen, though in Palestine; had preserved distinct municipal government, and had joined in a political alliance, offensive and defensive. To the Jews they were a continual offence, and they were the first to suffer from the frenzied fanaticism of the nation when it rose in its last great revolt. Most of them, full of busy life, and adorned with splendid temples, baths, theatres, and public buildings, when Jesus passed through them, were destined, before another generation, to perish amidst fire and sword.

Even here the fame of the great Teacher attracted multitudes of Jews settled all over the half-foreign district, especially in its towns and cities, and revived for a time the cheering scenes of the past. The cripple, the blind, the dumb, the deformed,[d] and many others, variously afflicted, were either brought to Him, or came; till He was once more forced, as of old, to retreat to the hills, in the vain effort to gain quiet. The popular excitement, however, made rest impossible. They sought and found Him wherever He might be, and enjoyed not only the benefits of His supernatural power, but the richer blessings of His teaching.[12] Only one inci-

[12] Matt. 15. 29—31.

dent is given in detail.[13] A man had been brought to Him who was deaf, and could only stammer inarticulately; and He was besought to heal him. From what motive is not told, He varied His usual course. Taking him aside from the multitude, perhaps to have more freedom, perhaps to avoid their too great excitement and its possibly hurtful political consequences, He put His fingers into the man's ears, and touched his tongue with a finger moistened on His own lips. It may be that these simple forms were intended to waken faith in one who could hear no words, for, without the fitting spirit, the miracle would not have been wrought. Looking up to heaven, as if to lift the thoughts of the unfortunate man to the Eternal Father, whose power alone could heal him, Jesus then, at last, uttered the single word of the popular dialect—"Ephphatha"—"Be opened"—and he was perfectly cured. An injunction to keep the miracle private was of no avail: the whole country was presently filled with reports of it, and of other similar wonders.

[13] Mark 7. 32—37.

The vast concourse attracted by such scenes may be imagined;[14] for in the East especially, it is easy for the population, with their simple wants, and the mildness of the sky, which in the warm months invites sleeping in the open air by night, to camp out as they think fit. But, as often happens, even in our own day, with the Easter pilgrims at Jerusalem, many found their provisions run short, and as in these strange and motley crowds numbers often die of want,[15] many of those following Jesus might have sunk by the way but for His thoughtful care, for numbers had come far. Once more the crowds were caused to sit on the ground, and were fed from the scanty provision found on the spot, which was no more than seven of the round loaves of the country, and a few small dried fishes from the Lake of Galilee. Four thousand men, besides women and children, were supplied from this scanty store, and seven baskets[e] of fragments, afterwards gathered, attested that they had suffered no stint.

[14] Matt. 15. 32—38. Mark 8. 1—9.

[15] Tobler's Topograph. v Jerus. ii 698.

Leaving the eastern side of the Lake, to which His wanderings had led Him, Jesus now, once more, crossed to the neighbourhood of Magdala,[f] at the lower end of the Plain of

CHAP. XLV.

Gennesareth, and close to Capernaum. He had hardly reappeared before His enemies were once more in motion. The Pharisees had already stifled their dislike of the Herodians, and had formed an alliance with them, that they might the more easily crush Him. It marked the growing malignity of feeling that a class fanatically proud of their ceremonial and moral purity—a class from whose midst had sprung the Zealots for the Law, who abhorred all rule except that of a restored theocracy—should have banded themselves with a party of moral indifferentists, partial to monarchy, and guilty of flattering even the hated family of Herod. But a still more ominous sign of increasing danger showed itself in even Sadducees joining the Pharisees to make new attempts to compromise Jesus with the authorities.

The Sadducees, few, but haughty and powerful, held the highest posts in the Jewish state, and represented the Law. They were of the priestly caste, and held the chief offices in the hierarchy. Their name was perhaps derived from the famous ancient family of Zadok, of whom Ezekiel speaks as having the charge of the altar, and as, alone, of the sons of Levi, appointed to come before the Eternal, to serve Him.[16] Joshua, the son of Jozedek, the comrade of Zerubbabel, was of this House, so that, after the Return, as before it, it seems to have been the foremost among the priestly families. In any case, the Sadducees of the times of Josephus and the Apostles not only held the highest Temple offices, but represented the purest Jewish blood.[17]

But this priestly aristocracy were by no means the most zealous for the sanctuary from which they drew their honours and wealth. They counted in their ancestry not only high priests like Joshua and Simon the Just, but traitors to their country like Manasseh,[g] Menelaus, and the younger Onias. Already, in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, they had given occasion for the charge that the highest officials had been foremost in breaking the theocratic laws, and had even sought to turn parts of the Temple into a splendid family mansion.[18] They had coquetted and debased their offices to win favour with the Ptolemies and the Syrian kings; they had held back, in half Greek irreligiousness,

[16] Ezek. 40. 46. Zunz and Fürst's Bibel.

[17] Ant. xviii. 3. 4. Acts 4. 1—3; 5. 17.

[18] Ezra 9. 2. Neh. 13. 7.

from taking a vigorous part in the glorious Maccabæan struggle, and now truckled to heathen procurators, or with a half heathen king, to preserve their honours and vested interests. To please Herod, they had admitted Simon Boëthus, the Alexandrian, the father of the king's young wife, to the high priesthood, from which a strict Jew, Jesus the son of Phabi, had been expelled to make room for him. They had even shown frank and hearty submission and loyalty to Rome.

The nation, with its chosen religious leaders, the Pharisees—the representatives of the "Saints" who had conquered in the great war of religious independence—never forgot the faint-heartedness and treachery of the priestly nobility in that magnificent struggle. Their descent might secure its members hereditary possession of the dignified offices of the Church, and there might still be a charm in their historical names; but they were regarded with open distrust and dislike by the nation and the Pharisees alike, and had to make many concessions to Pharisaic rules to protect themselves from actual violence.

The strict fanatical heads of the Synagogue and leaders of the people, and the cold and polished Temple aristocracy, were thus bitterly opposed, and it added to the keenness of the dislike that the dreams by the Rabbinical, or Pharisaic party, of a restored theocracy, could only be realized through the existing organization of the priesthood, of which the indifferent Sadducees had the control.

Theological hatred, the bitterest of all passions, added additional intensity to this political opposition. The Sadducees had no inclination to be taught their duty by the Rabbis of village synagogues, and rejected the whole body of Pharisaic tradition and jurisprudence, taking for their only authority the written law of Moses, though to this were generally added some traditions of their own. Holding the highest offices of the theocracy, and the members of families which had officiated in the Temple of Solomon itself, they disdained to be taught what was lawful in Israel, or to accept the hair-splitting refinements of the democratic and puritan Pharisees. To the constantly increasing decisions and

CHAP. XLV.

requirements of the Rabbis, they stolidly opposed the venerable letter of the ancient Law. That their creed was cold and rationalistic, compared to that of the Rabbis, was, perhaps, the result of this attitude, but was not its cause. The instinctive conservatism of "the first in rank," inevitably took its stand on the original documents of the Law in opposition to the heated exaggerations of the plebeian schoolmen. Both sides vaunted their orthodoxy.[19] The Sadducees were as deeply committed to support the theocracy as their popular rivals, for it was the basis of their dignities, their wealth, and even their existence. Fierce controversies, often culminating in bloodshed, marked the devotion of both alike to their opinions, and these opinions themselves illustrated the position of the two parties. The Sadducees uniformly fell back on the letter of the Law, the prescriptive rights of the Temple, and the glory of the priesthood; the Pharisees, on the other hand, took their stand on the authority of the Rabbinical traditions, the value of sacred acts apart from the interposition of the priest, and advocated popular interests generally.

[19] Ant. xvii. 2. 4; xviii. 1. 4.

The contrast between the spirit of the two parties showed itself prominently in the harsh tenacity with which the Temple aristocracy held to the letter of the Mosaic Law in its penalties, as opposed to the milder spirit in which the Pharisees interpreted them, in accordance with the spirit of the times. The Pharisees, for example, explained the Mosaic demand—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth [20]—metaphorically, and allowed recompense to be made in money, but the Sadducees required exact compliance. The Sadducees required that the widow should literally spit in the face of the brother-in-law who refused her the levirate marriage rights,[21] but it was enough for the Pharisees that she spat on the ground before him. The Pharisees permitted the carcass of a beast that had died [22] to be used for any other purpose than food, to save loss to the owner, but the Sadducees denounced the penalties of uncleanness on so lax a practice. They sternly required that a false witness be put to death, according to the letter of the Law, even if his testimony had done the accused no injury, and many did

[20] Deut. 22. 24.

[21] Deut. 25. 9.

[22] Lev. 7. 24.

not even shrink from carrying out the reasoning of the Rabbis, that, as two witnesses were always required to condemn the accused, both witnesses should always be executed when any perjury had been committed in the case.[23]

[23] Grätz, Gesch. d. Jud. 2 auf. 3. 459.

This blind insistance on the letter of laws which ages had made obselete, fixed on the Sadducees the name of "The Condemning Judges," and Josephus testifies that they were more ruthless in their judicial decisions than any other Jews.[24] The Pharisees, on the other hand, had for their axiom the saying of Joshua Ben Perachia—"Judge everything on the presumption of innocence;" or that of Hillel—"Put yourself in your neighbour's place before you judge him." Hence, a prisoner blessed himself when he saw opposite him, on his judges, the broad phylactery of the Pharisee, and not the white robe of the priestly Sadducee. Both our Lord and St. Paul had the multitude stirred up against them by the Pharisees, but they were condemned by Sadducee judges, and it was Sadducee judges who murdered St. James.[25]

[24] Ant. xx. 9. 1.

[25] Derenbourg, 200. Renan, Vie de Jésus 46.

This relentless ferocity of priestly houses, who rested on the favour of the rich and titled few, was dictated only by the class interests of the Temple nobility, whose claims and privileges could not be justified except by the blind maintenance of things as they were. Unchanging conservatism was their only safety; the least innovation seemed an omen of revolution.

But there were even deeper grounds of dislike and opposition. The Pharisees, as the hereditary representatives of puritans who had delivered the nation in the great struggle against Syria, looked forward with touching though fanatical yearning, to the realization of the prophecies of Daniel, which, as they understood them, promised that Israel, under the Messiah, and with it, themselves, should be raised "to dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him, and that His kingdom should be everlasting."[26] They believed that this national triumph would be inaugurated as soon as Israel, on its part, carried out to the full the requirements of the ceremonial laws, as expounded in their traditions. It was a

[26] Dan. 7. 14.

CHAP. XLV.

matter of formal covenant, in which the truth and righteousness—that is, the justice, of Jehovah were involved. The morals they demanded might be only mechanical, and their observances slavery to rites and ceremonies, but they believed that if they fulfilled their part, God must needs fulfil His, and they strove hard to make the nation, like themselves, "blameless," touching this righteousness;[27] that they might claim divine interposition as a right. The zeal of the Pharisee for the Law was, thus, a mere hired service, with all the restlessness, exaggeration, emulation, and moral impurity, inseparable from a mercenary spirit.

To this dream of the future, the Sadducees opposed a stolid and contemptuous indifference. Enjoying the honours and good things of the world, they had no taste for a revolution which should introduce, they knew not what, in the place of a state of things with which they were quite contented. Their fathers had had no such ideas, and the sons ridiculed them. They not only laughed aside the Pharisaic idea of righteousness, as identified with a life of minute and endless observance, but fell back on the Mosaic Law, and mocked at the Messianic hope from which the zeal of their rivals had sprung. "The Sadducees," says Josephus, "believe that the soul dies with the body, and recognize no authority but that of the Law.[28] Good was to be done for its own sake, not for reward in the Messianic kingdom, or at the resurrection of the dead." "The Sadducees," says Rabbi Nathan,[29] "use, daily, vessels of gold and silver, not for pride, but because the Pharisees torment themselves in this life, though they will have nothing in the next."[h] As to the world to come, they left it doubtful, maintaining, if the words in the Talmud be not an interpolation, in opposition to the Pharisees, that it could not be proved from the Books of Moses.[30] They even went the length of inventing difficulties which they supposed involved in the resurrection of the dead.[31] "They believe neither in the resurrection, nor in angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees confess both," says St. Luke.[32]

To all this was added the embitterment of opposite views on the great subject of human freedom and divine foreknowledge. Like all puritans, the Pharisees exalted the

27 Phil. 3. 6

28 Ant. xviii. 1. 4.

29 Geiger, Urschrift, 105, note.

30 Derenbourg, 131.

31 Matt. 22. 23.

32 Acts 23. 8

latter though they did not deny the former. They had a profound belief in Providence, understanding by it that they themselves were the favourites of Jehovah, and could count on His taking their side. "The Sadducees," says Josephus, "maintain that there is no such thing as predestination, and deny that human affairs are regulated by it, maintaining that our destiny rests with ourselves; that we are the cause of our own good fortune, and bring evil on us by our own folly."[33] The Sadducee was, in fact, a mere man of the world, believing only in the present: the Pharisee, a mystic, to whom the future and the supernatural were all.

[33] Ant. xiii. 5. 9.

The nation zealously supported the Pharisees. The spirit of the age was against the Sadducees. The multitude disliked to hear that what the Maccabæans had defended with their blood was uncanonical. They yielded cheerfully to the heavy yoke of the Pharisaic Rabbis, for, the more burdensome the duties required, the greater the future reward for performance. The Pharisees, moreover, were part of the people, mingled habitually with them as their spiritual guides, and were the examples of exact obedience to their own precepts. Their Messianic dreams were of national glory, and thus the crowd saw in them the representatives of their own fondest aspirations. The Sadducees—isolated, haughty, harsh, and unnational—were hated: their rivals honoured and followed. The extravagances and the hypocrisy of some might be ridiculed, but they were the accepted popular leaders.[34]

[34] Hausrath, i. 117—132. Derenbourg 127—139; 157—200; 108, 104. Herzog, xii. 475.

Indeed, apart from all other considerations, the fact that the Sadducees supported zealously every government in turn, was enough to set the people against them. Instead of this, the Pharisees shared and fostered the patriotic and religious abhorrence of the Roman supremacy, and were sworn enemies of the hated Herodian family. The result was that, in the words of Josephus, "the Pharisees had such an influence with the people, that nothing could be done about divine worship, prayers, or sacrifices,[35] except according to their wishes and rules, for the community believed they sought only the loftiest and worthiest aims alike in

[35] Ant. xviii 1 3, 4.

CHAP. XLV.

word and deed. The Sadducees were few in number; and though they belonged to the highest ranks, had so little influence, that when elected to office, they were forced to comply with the ritual of the Pharisees from fear of the people."

There were, doubtless, many priests who were not Sadducees—men serving God humbly; devoted to their sacred duties, and living in full sympathy of thought and life with the Pharisees.[36] In the disputes with Jesus, we may be sure that many such Pharisaic priests; the great company, perhaps, who, within a short time after His death, became "obedient to the Faith,"[37] took no part in the fierce malignity of their brethren. But, now, for the first time, the Sadducees—haughty clerical aristocrats of the Temple—joined with the hated vulgar Pharisee of the Synagogue to accomplish the destruction of the new Teacher. It was the most ominous sign of the beginning of the end that had yet appeared.

Eager for a fresh dispute, the strange allies, very likely fresh from Jerusalem, no sooner found that He had returned, than they sallied forth[38] to open a discussion. "You claim," said they, "to be a teacher come from God, and have given many 'signs' that you are so in the miracles you have performed. But all these signs have been untrustworthy, for we know that the earth and even the air are filled with demons. It is quite possible that the prince of the devils, to deceive men into supporting your claims, may have given you power for a time over these demons, and thus all that you have done may be only a dark plot to undo us. The Egyptian magicians did miracles, and our fathers did not believe even Moses for the common wonders he did, for they might have been wrought only by magic and incantations.[39] A sign from heaven, however, is different. It is beyond the power of devils: 'they can neither shine like the sun, nor give light like the moon, nor give rain unto men.'[40] Our Rabbis tell us that when the King-Messias comes, and the great war between Gog and Magog begins, signs from heaven will appear.[41] We are not to expect Him till a rainbow has spanned the world and filled it with light.[42]

36 Derenbourg, 121.

37 Acts 6. 7.

38 Mark 8.10—12.

39 Maimonides, in Sepp, v. 62.

40 Baruch 6. 53, 66.

41 Talmud, Sabbat. f. 139. 1.

42 Sohar, Gen. f. 53. 2.

Give us bread from heaven, as Moses did, or signs in the sun and moon like Joshua, or call down thunder and hail like Samuel, or fire and rain like Elijah, or make the sun turn back like Isaiah, or let us hear the Bath Kol which came to Simon the Just—that we may believe you."[43]

But Jesus knew the men with whom he had to do, and would hold no communication with them beyond the shortest. The tempter had long before urged Him to make a vain display of His supernatural power in support of His claims, but as it was monstrous that miracles should be thrown away on the Prince of Darkness, or wrought at his will, it was no less so to work them at the bidding of men filled with his spirit. The worth of proof depends on the openness to conviction. He had already said that to cast pearls before wild swine, was only to invite them to turn and rend you. No "sign" could avail where there was no sympathy. The truth He came to proclaim appealed to the heart, and must be its own evidence, winning its way by its own divine beauty into humble and ready breasts. External proofs could only establish external facts.

With biting irony He turned on them in a few brief incisive sentences. "How is it that ye, who are so skilled in the signs of the heavens, are so dull to read those around you? You watch the sky, and talk of signs in it. In the evening you say, 'Fair weather, for the sky is red;' and in the morning, 'Foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and lowering.' When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say, 'There comes a shower;' when you see a south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be heat.'[44] You pretend to tell, by the way the smoke blows on the last evening of the Feast of Tabernacles, what weather there will be for the year. If it turn northward, you say there will be much rain, and the poor will rejoice; if it turn south, you say the rich will rejoice and the poor mourn, for there will be little rain; if it turn eastward, all rejoice; if westward, all mourn.[45] If God have been so gracious to men as to give signs of fair weather, of wind, and of rain, how much more must He have given signs of the near approach of the Messiah? You are diligent to excess in studying the sky, but you ask signs of

[43] Rosenmüller, i. 328. Paulus, ii. 328 Sepp, v. 65 Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ii. 231, 421.

[44] Matt. 16. 1—4 Luke 12. 54—57.

[45] Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ii. 231.

CHAP. XLV

my being the Messiah, as if none had been given, when many unmistakable ones invite you in your own Scriptures, in the events of the day, the preaching of John, and in my own miracles, teaching, and life.[46] An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign of the approach of the kingdom of God to suit it, while it is blind to the signs around, that the Messiah must come, if the nation is not to perish. I will give you no sign but that of the prophet Jonah, for as the warning of his words, was the only one given to the Ninevites, my preaching will be the only sign given to you. It is its own evidence. Apart from my miracles; my life, and the divine and heavenly truth I preach, are sufficient proof that I am sent by God. Hereafter, indeed, Jonah will become a sign in another sense, for as he was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so I, when put to death, shall be the same time in the grave."

[46] Rosenmüller's Scholia on New Test. i. 329.

So saying, He left them. It was clearly unsafe to stay in their neighbourhood. Henceforth He could only lead a fugitive outlawed life, and with a deep sigh at the hopelessness of winning over men blinded by prejudice, and hardened in heart, He entered the boat once more, and crossed the Lake to the lonely and secure eastern side.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### IN FLIGHT ONCE MORE.



THE renewed attempt to involve Jesus in a damaging dispute had failed. He had not made an ostentatious display of supernatural power at the bidding of His enemies, but had turned sharply on them, and had left them discomfited before the multitude. They had hoped to depreciate Him as a mere unauthorised intruder into the office of Rabbi, and to have an easy triumph, but His modest, yet dignified and keen retort had put them to shame. Their bitterness against one, now hated and feared more than ever, was so much the greater.

His departure that autumn evening might well have saddened His heart. It was His final rejection on the very spot where He had laboured most, and He was leaving it, to return, indeed, for a passing visit, but never to appear again publicly, or to teach, or work miracles. As the boat swept out into the Lake, and the whole scene opened before Him —the white beach, the green plain, the wooded hills behind, the white houses reflected in the water, and over them the stately synagogue, in which He had taught so often, and done such mighty acts,—it was no wonder that He sighed deeply in spirit, borne down by the thought of the darkened mind, the perverted conscience, and the stony heart that had rejected the things of their peace.

As He sat in the boat amidst His disciples He was still full of such thoughts. They had heard His words to His enemies, but they did not seem to realize all the danger implied in the incident. Many had been led away from Him by the deceitful slanders, or specious arguments

CHAP. XLVI. of the hierarchical party, and it was well that they should be put on their guard.

"Take heed, beware," said He solemnly, "of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and of the party of Herod."[1] It so happened, however, that in their hurried flight, having had no time to lay in provisions, there was only one loaf in the boat, and with the childishness of uneducated minds, they at once fancied He referred to their having come without bread. At the well of Samaria they had thought He referred to common food when He spoke of the meat of the soul; they had been as dull in catching the metaphor of His flesh being the bread of life, and hereafter they were to think only of natural rest when He spoke of the dead Lazarus as sleeping. Reflection, like continuity of thought, comes only with mental training. The uncultured mind, whether old or young, learns slowly. They might have remembered from the twice repeated miraculous feedings of the multitude, that it was indifferent how little they had with them when their Master was in their midst, but it needs a thoughtfulness and depth beyond that of average fishermen and peasants, such as they were, to reason and reflect. "He tells us," they whispered, "that if we buy bread from a Pharisee or a Sadducee, the bread would defile us, as it would if we bought it from a Samaritan."[2] So rude was the spiritual material from which Jesus had to create the founders of Christianity!

"O ye of little faith," interrupted He, "why do ye reason among yourselves because ye have no loaves? Are your hearts hardened that you cannot understand? Have you forgotten when I broke the five loaves among the five thousand, and the seven among the four thousand, how many baskets and wallets full of fragments ye took up? How could you think you would ever want after that, whether we had bread with us or not? Do you not see that when I spoke of loaves I was thinking not of loaves, but of instruction? Beware of the teaching of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians,[3] about me or about religion. They would gladly fill your minds with slanders and misleading fancies; draw you away from me; and corrupt your hearts

[1] Matt. 16. 5—12. Mark 8. 14—21.

[2] Rosenmüller's Scholia on New Test. i. 331. Hor. Heb. ii. 233. Buxtorf, Syn. Jud. 401.

[3] Wieseler's Beiträge, 121. Godwyn's Aaron and Moses, 61.

by their superstition, and religious acting, and self-righteous pride, or by their worldliness and unbelief."



The course of the boat was directed to the head of the Lake, to Bethsaida, newly renamed Julias by the tetrarch Philip, in honour of the daughter of Augustus, his patron. The old name of the village had not yet been lost, however. It was on the route to the district to which Jesus was hurrying, and might well have detained Him as a resting place, under other circumstances. Lying on the green hill above the plain of Batiha—the scene of the miraculous feeding—it overlooked, at a short distance, the entrance of the Jordan into the Lake. To the west stretched the wide tract of black basalt, rough and barren, reaching from the marshes of Jordan, dotted with buffaloes luxuriating in the mire, to Chorazin and Capernaum. To the south rose the bare table-land on the east of the Lake, and the town itself, boasting the splendid tomb just built by Philip, for his own use, was not wanting in beauty.[4] But Jesus had no leisure to stay, nor was there an inducement in any kindly bearing of the population towards Him. He had often taught in their streets and synagogue, and had lived in their houses,[5] and done many mighty works before them, yet, like the people of Chorazin and Capernaum, they had listened to their Rabbis rather than to Him, and had refused to repent. There still, however, were some who had better thoughts, and these, seeing Him enter the town, hurriedly brought a blind man, and besought Him to touch him. Even in a place that would not hear Him His tender heart could not withhold its pity. It would have attracted notice when He most sought to avoid it, had He healed the sufferer in the public street, and, therefore, taking him by the hand, He led him into the fields outside. He might have wrought the cure by a word, but He chose to use the same simple form as in the case of the dumb man in the Decapolis. Touching the blind eyes with His moistened finger, perhaps to arrest the wandering thoughts and predispose him to trust in the Healer, He asked the blind man "if he saw aught?" The supernatural power of the touch had had due effect. With upturned eyes, the hitherto blind could

[4] Thomson, Land and Book, 360. Röhr's Palästina, 126.

[5] Luke 13. 26. Matt. 12. 21. Mark 8. 22—26

CHAP. XLVI.

see indistinctly. Men moved before him, in undefined haze, like trees.[a] The partial cure must have strengthened his faith, and thus prepared him for perfect restoration. Another touch, and he could see clearly, far and near.[6] "Go to your home," said Jesus, "without returning to the town, and tell no one about it."[b] The less publicity given to His acts or words, the safer for Christ.

The retreat to which Jesus was making was the town of Cæsarea Philippi. It lay on the north-east of the reedy and marshy plain of El Huleh. It was close to Dan, the extreme north of the bounds of ancient Israel, as Beersheba was the extreme south. It was almost on a line with Tyre, and thus, far out of the reach of the Rabbis and High Priests. A town, Baal-Gad—named from the Canaanite god of fortune—had occupied the site from immemorial antiquity; but Philip had rebuilt it splendidly, three years before Christ's birth, and, in accordance with the prevailing flattery of the Emperor, had called it Cæsarea, in honour of Augustus. It had been the pleasure of his peaceful reign to adorn it with altars, votive images, and statues,[7] and his own name had been added by the people, to distinguish it from the Cæsarea on the sea-coast.[8] Herod the Great, Philip's father, had already, nineteen years before Christ, in grateful acknowledgement of the gift of the districts of Panias and Ulatha, adorned the spot with a grand temple of white marble, in heathen flattery of the Emperor, deified, thus, while still alive, by the king of the Jews. The worship of the shepherd god Pan, to whom a cave out of which burst the waters of the Jordan, was sacred; had given its second name—Panias—now, Banias—to the place. It was one of the loveliest spots in the Holy Land, built on a terrace of rock, part of the range of Hermon, which rose behind it seven or eight thousand feet. Countless streams murmured down the slopes, amidst a unique richness and variety of flower, and shrub, and tree. The chief source of the Jordan, still bursts in a full silver-clear stream from a bottomless depth of water, in the old cave of Pan, at the foot of the mountain, from beneath a high perpendicular wall of rock, adorned with

6 τηλαυγῶς.

7 Ant. xv. 10. 3. Bell. Jud i. 21. 3; iii. 10. 7. Vita, 13. Renan, chap. 8.

8 Röhr, 183. Thomson, 228. Furrer, 362.

niches once filled with marble Naiads of the stream and Satyrs of the woods; and with countless votive tablets; but now strewn round with the ruins of the shepherd god's ancient temple. Thick woods still shade the channel of the young river. Oaks and olive groves alternate with pastures and fields of grain, and high over all rises the old castle of Banias, perhaps the "Tower of Lebanon that looketh towards Damascus," of the song of Solomon.[9]

[9] Song of Sol. 7. 4.

To this scene Jesus had now come, and might have found in the charms of nature a balm for His tired and stricken heart, had He been free to think of such outward charms. From the hill on which the town stood—one of the lower spurs of Hermon—the view ranged over all northern Palestine, from the plains of Phenicia, to the hills of Samaria. In the north-west rose the dark gigantic mountain forms of Lebanon; to the south stretched out the rich table-land of the Hauran. From Hermon, not from Zion, or the Mount of Olives, one beholds "the good land, the land of brooks, of waters, of fountains, of depths that spring out of the valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey."[10] Far and near the surpassingly fruitful landscape was watered by sparkling brooks flowing into the main stream of Jordan, here only twenty steps broad. So far back as the days of the Judges, the children of Dan, wandering hither from the south, had found it to want nothing that earth could give. Wheat fields alternated with fields of barley, maize, sesame, and rice, olive orchards, meadows, and flowery pastures, the delight of countless bees; and the slopes were covered with woods, vocal with the songs of birds.

[10] Deut. 8. 7, 8

But even Jesus had few thoughts, at such a time, for such natural charms. He was a fugitive and outlaw, rejected by the nation He had come to save; safe only because He was outside the bounds of Israel, in a heathen region. It was clear that His public work was virtually over, for even in Galilee, where multitudes had followed Him, His popularity had waned under the calumnies of the Rabbis, and His steady refusal to sanction the popular conception of the Messiah. From the moment they had seen that He sought

only spiritual aims, and was not a second Judas the Galilæan, they had gone back to their own teachers, who favoured the national views, and instead of demanding repentance and a new life, recognized them as the favourites of Jehovah, and the predestined heirs of the Messiah's Kingdom. The death of the Baptist foretold His own fate. The crisis of His life had come. If He had won few true followers, He had securely founded the New Kingdom of God. It might indeed, as yet, be but a seed in the great field of the world, or a speck of leaven in the vast mass of humanity; but the seed would multiply itself to the ends of the earth, and the leaven would slowly but surely spread, age after age, through the whole race of man. His own death would now no longer be fatal to the New Society; the germ of its fullest development would survive in the little circle of the Twelve, and of the few other faithful souls who had received Him.

But it was necessary that the band to whom the spread of His Kingdom after His death would be entrusted should be confirmed in their faith, and enlightened by explicit disclosures of His relations to themselves and to it. There was much, even in their humble and honest hearts, that needed correction and elevation. They were Jews, trained in the theology of His enemies, and still unconsciously influenced by it to a great extent.

Jesus had utterly different conceptions of His kingdom from theirs, and, therefore, had not, as yet, claimed the title of Messiah in any formal way, even in the circle of the Twelve, though He had never hesitated to accept homage, as such, when it was offered. Once, to the Samaritan woman, and once, by silent assent, to the Twelve, He had assumed the awful dignity, and the whole spirit of His teaching and life implied His claim to it. But, even to the Twelve, there had been a reticence and caution, that He might not anticipate the development of their religious nature, and disclose a mystery they were, as yet, unable to receive. Before the people at large He had never assumed the Messiahship, for, with their gross political ideas, to have done so would have been to bring Himself into collision with the State at once. He had even, as far as possible,

kept His supernatural work in the background, shunning publicity as a worker of miracles, and leaving the progress of His kingdom rather to the divine beauty of His teaching and life. To have put Himself forward, from the first, as the Messiah, would have closed at once all avenues of influence, for He was in every way the very opposite of the national ideal. They expected their race to be exalted to supreme honour and power. He sought to humble them to the lowliest contrition. They expected that, under the Messiah, the heathen would bow before Israel; He proclaimed that the heathen were to have equal rank and rights with "the people of God." They expected that the traditions of the Rabbis, with their infinite observances, were to be made the law for all countries and ages; He announced their utter abrogation, and the establishment of a new covenant of filial liberty with men at large, in place of the old covenant with a single people. They expected a sudden and violent political convulsion, heralded by a disturbance of the order of nature by unprecedented signs and wonders in the heavens, and on earth, and of the history of nations. He taught that the Messianic kingdom would be brought about only by the silent might of words, and of the Spirit of God, renewing all natural and moral relations of men, but only by a slow and well-nigh imperceptible advance. Not only the nation, but even the Twelve, had utterly to unlearn the fixed ideas of the past, before a spiritual Messiahship could be welcome to them. How difficult that was, is shown by the request of Salome, the mother of James and John, after the disciples had formally acknowledged their Leader as the Messiah, that her two sons should sit in the high places of honour, on the right and left of the Messianic throne.[11]

[11] Mark 10. 35 Matt. 20. 20.

In the conscious divinity of His nature, Jesus had never yet asked the Twelve any question respecting Himself, but it was necessary, now that the end was approaching, that they should know Him in His true dignity. He must reveal Himself definitely as the Messiah, and be formally accepted as such. To have confined Himself, like John, to the announcement of the kingdom of God as at hand, would have left that kingdom incomplete, and have created

CHAP. XLVI. expectations of the future advent of some other as its Head. Without a personal centre round which to gather, the work of His life would have faded away with His death. He Himself, in the deathless beauty of His life, and the infinite attractiveness of His self-sacrificing death, must necessarily be the abiding soul of the new Society through all ages, for its fundamental principle, from the first, had been personal love towards Him. His words, His whole life, His voluntary humiliation; the transcendent self-restraint and self-denial which had used unlimited supernatural power only for others; and had submitted to poverty, obscurity, and opposition, erelong to culminate in the endurance of a violent death for the good of mankind, raised Him to a divine and perfect ideal of love and goodness, which, of itself, proclaimed Him the King—that is, the Messiah—in the new kingdom He had founded. "The love of Christ" was to be the watchword of His followers in all ages: the sentiment that would nerve them to endure triumphantly the bitterest persecutions, and even death: that would constrain them to life-long devotion to His cause; in obedience to His commands, and in imitation of His example. The words of a future disciple, St. Paul, would be only the utterance of all others worthy the name, in every age. "The love of Christ constraineth us."[12] With St. John, they would "love Him because He first loved us."[13] He had founded a kingdom, for the first and only time in history, on personal love to the founder, and, as such, He must definitely reveal Himself in His spiritual relation to it as, henceforth, its recognized Messiah-King.

[12] 2 Cor 5 14.

[13] 1 John 4. 19.

A crisis so momentous in the development of His great work must have profoundly affected a nature, sensitive and holy, like His. His whole life was an unbroken communion with His Father in Heaven, but there were moments when this passion of the soul appeared to grow more intense. His human weakness, though unstained by evil, was fain to strengthen itself by the near presence of His Father above, with whom every beat of His thoughts moved in undisturbed and awful harmony. In all His temptations, He had ever betaken Himself to prayer, and, now, when

Israel had rejected Him, and there rose before Him only the vision of the Cross; when His kingdom, more clearly than ever, was to go forth to conquer the world only from the gates of His opened grave; when He had, therefore, while yet with them, to take His seat among those in whom that kingdom had its first subjects,—as its Messiah-King—the moment was one of unspeakable sublimity.

He had, thus, been absorbed in thought and separated in fervent prayer, as they passed from town to town on His northward journey, until at last they had reached the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi.[14] There, He once more went aside, in some lonely spot among the rich wooded valleys, for solitary prayer. Before He returned to the Twelve, He had determined to delay no longer a full self-revelation: to throw aside the veil, and openly assume the Messiahship which had long been silently ascribed to Him in His little circle, and as silently accepted, without a formal and definite assumption.

14 Matt. 16. 13—20. Mark 8. 27—30. Luke 9. 18—21.

"Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" sufficed to introduce the momentous topic. The answer showed how little He had been understood, and how utterly the fixed national idea of a Messiah had darkened the general mind. "Some say with Antipas, the spirit of John the Baptist has entered Thee, and that Thou workest through it, or that Thou art John himself, risen from the dead, and appearing under another name; some that Thou art Elias, who, like Enoch, has never died, but was taken up bodily to heaven, and has now returned in the body as Malachi predicted, to prepare for the Messiah; some that Thou art Jeremiah, come to reveal the Ark and the sacred vessels which he hid in Mount Nebo, and thus inaugurate the approaching reign of the Messiah; or one of the prophets, sent from the other world by God, as a herald of the Coming One."[c] They could not add that any regarded Him as the Messiah. His refusal to appeal to force, and head a political revolution, had caused an almost universal repudiation of the thought.

Jesus expressed neither sorrow nor displeasure at such an utter failure to recognize Him in His true character. He had been the subject of the keenest interest and discussion, from

CHAP. XLVI.

His felt relation to the Expected One, and this, of itself, promised a rich result, when His followers, after His departure, directed the minds of men to a clearer conception of the Messianic Kingdom. He Himself knew whom He was, and was unaffected by any popular judgment. But He had now to obtain from the lips of the Twelve themselves,—the special witnesses of His life and daily words,—a higher confession, which He knew they only needed a question from Him to utter gladly. "But whom say ye that I am?" Instantly from the lips of Simon Peter, the impulsive, tender, loving, rock-like disciple, came all that the full heart of his Master waited to hear. "Thou, my Master and Lord," said he, doubtless with beaming joy, "Thou art the Christ—Antah Meschicha—the Son of the living God." Thus, in the outskirts of the heathen town dedicated to the deified Augustus, Jesus was proclaimed, with no preparatory circumstance, in the privacy of a small circle of Galilæan fishermen, as the King of the Universal Israel: here, a fugitive whose only earthly crown was to be the one of thorns, He assumed publicly the empire of all the world, as the Messiah of God.

The greatness and significance of this confession of Peter's, made in the name of the Twelve, cannot be exaggerated. It was a striking advance towards realizing the great truth of the Incarnation, and the clear intelligence would one day follow the open and ardent utterance of the heart. Hitherto Jesus had revealed Himself chiefly as the "Son of Man," and "the Son of God;" but He now received from those who had been constantly with Him, as a faint acknowledgment of the conviction wrought by His life, and words, and mighty works, the formal inauguration as the Messiah-King of a spiritual and deathless empire. Nathanael had anticipated the great confession, indeed, at the opening of His ministry,[15] and the disciples had recognized Him as the Son of God, on that wild night when they found that the form walking on the waves was not the spirit of the storm, but their loving Master, and when the very winds and waves were seen to obey Him.[16] But the time was not then ripe for His definite installation as Messiah, and the incidents passed off. Simon, also, had cheered His troubled soul, when the great secession

15 John 1. 50.

16 Matt. 14. 33.

of the disciples took place at Capernaum,[17] by an anticipation of his confession at Cæsarea Philippi, but He had waived it, as it were, aside. Now, however, He formally accepted what, hitherto, He had silently allowed; for the hour had come.

[17] John 6. 69.

"Blessed art Thou, Simon Barjona," said He; "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this to you, for you have not learned it from my lowly outward form, and it has come to you from no human teaching; My Father in Heaven has thought you worthy to have it revealed to you." It was, indeed, an amazing utterance. The Twelve had been the daily witnesses of the human simplicity and poverty of His life, His homelessness, His weary wanderings afoot, and all the circumstances of His constant humiliation, which might have counterbalanced the great memories which their privileged intimacy had afforded, and obscured their spiritual significance. These last months had, moreover, surrounded Him with all the depreciations of a fugitive life. Yet they had broken through the hereditary national prejudice of their race, with whom tradition and absolute uniformity in religious things had an inconceivable power,—they had disregarded the judgment of their spiritual rulers and leaders; risen above the utmost ideas of those around; and had seen, in their lowly rejected Master, the true Lord of the new kingdom of God. Nor is the fact less wonderful that the life and words of Jesus, seen thus closely, should have created such a lofty and holy conception of His spiritual greatness, amidst all the counteractions of outward fact and daily familiarity. In spite of all, He was the Malka Meschicha—the King-Messiah—to those who had known Him best.

The ardent, immovable devotion of Peter, the first to own his Master as Messiah, as he had been first in all other utterances of trust and reverence, won for itself an illustrious tribute from Jesus. The weary, sad heart, that had so much to grieve it, had been filled for the time with a pure and kingly joy at the proof thus given, that, at last, a true and solid beginning had been made. He had, doubtless, long yearned for a time when the Twelve would be advanced enough in spiritual things to let Him disclose His utmost thoughts and ultimate designs, and this time had now come.

CHAP. XLVI. He had never yet spoken of the future government or organization of the New Kingdom, as a visible communion, and did not propose to lay down any detailed laws even now. He hastened to tell Peter, however, that this society,—His Church[d] or congregation, "called out" from the world at large, would be entrusted, after His decease, to him. As buildings in the country around were founded on a rock, that the floods and storms might not overthrow them, so it would be raised on the rock-like fidelity shown by him in his great confession.

Turning to him, He continued, "I have something to say that concerns thee. Thou art to me, as when I first saw you,—Petros;—the rock (petra) which I will make the foundation stone, when my Church, in which my followers will be enrolled, is to be built. In its building you will do me the greatest service, like the stone on which all others rest, itself resting on the firm rock beneath—which is Myself. On you and such rock-like souls, it will rise, but on you first; and the gates of death will be powerless against it, for it shall outlive the grave and reach on into eternity. Unopening though the gates of the grave be, they shall open wide to let forth my followers to the resurrection of the just, nor shall the powers of evil be able to overturn the new society thus gathered. I have called you the rock on which I shall raise my Church[e]—I call you also the steward, to whom the charge of it is entrusted. As such I shall give you, after my ascent to heaven, the keys of it,[18] to admit such as you think worthy, both Jews and heathen, and to shut out those whom you think unfit. I commit to you, moreover, the government and discipline of its membership: whatever you forbid as unbecoming my kingdom, or as unfitting for membership in it, shall be as if forbidden by me, myself, in heaven; and whatever you permit, as not contrary to its welfare, or not excluding from it, shall be as if I, myself, permitted it, from above. It will be left to your decision, which will be recognized before God, what may be forbidden, as a hindrance to entry into my Church on earth, or unworthy of it; and what may be permitted, as not barring from its membership."[f] How Peter exercised this honour in the Apostolic

[18] See Isaiah 22. 22. Gfrörer, i. 155.

Church was hereafter to be seen, when he rose as spokesman of the eleven in the election of a twelfth:[19] when he spoke for them on the Day of Pentecost, before the multitude, and by his constant mention as chief and foremost of the Apostles. Jesus was almost immediately to extend the same dignity and authority to the whole of the Twelve,[20] but Peter had just precedence in recognition of his worth and character. The figments of Roman creation, by which, from this tribute to his love and enthusiasm, a vast structure of priestly arrogance and usurpation has been raised, need no notice in this place.

[19] Acts 1. 15; 2. 14, 37, 38; 3. 1, 4, 12; 4. 8, 19; 5. 3, 29; 8. 20; 10. 5; 11. 2; 12. 5, &c., &c.

[20] Matt. 18. 18. See Stanley's Apostolic Age, 152 ff

The New Society was at last formally constituted, and provision made for its government and continuance after its founder's death. Henceforth, He moved in the circle of the Twelve as the recognized Messiah of whom they were the future designated heralds.

But the approaching end of the great drama could not be left untold. Jerusalem was the one spot in which alone the work of Jesus could be completed. Galilee had been only the place of preparation. The Temple and its ministering priests, the Rabbis and the schools, were in the Holy City. David had reigned there, and there must the Messiah be declared, to vindicate the honour of God, and proclaim the new spiritual theocracy in the centre of the religious world. His work in Galilee was virtually over, for though not finished, it was hopelessly paralyzed and checked. He might return, but it would avail nothing against the conspiracy that everywhere faced Him. But in Jerusalem His work was both to begin and to complete. He must go to the Capital, for Galilee was in great measure closed against Him. He had assumed the Messiahship, and He must needs proclaim it openly before His enemies in their stronghold. He knew that only death awaited Him, but that death had been foreseen in the eternal counsels of God as the mysterious atonement for the sins of the world.

It would have been premature to spread abroad the momentous incident of the ascription and formal acceptance of the title of Messiah. The Twelve must needs know the great truth, but the multitude must, for a time, be left

CHAP. XLVI. to their own fancies. He was to be preached as a crucified and risen Saviour, not as a Jewish Messiah, and this could not be till the end had come. Nor did the Twelve as yet understand the divine plan of salvation clearly enough, and the Jews, moreover, might have taken advantage of the preaching for seditious movements. So imperative was temporary secrecy, indeed, that He gave the strictest injunctions that no man should be told what had happened.

The idea of a suffering Messiah was, however, so wholly foreign to all prevailing conceptions, that it was indispensable that the catastrophe at Jerusalem, foreseen by Jesus from the first, but now near at hand, should be made familiar to the Twelve, as part of the all-wise purpose of God in the development of the new spiritual kingdom. It has been a disputed point whether any of the Rabbis of Christ's day had thought of the Messiah as destined to suffer and die.[g] Beyond question some had applied to Him the passages of Isaiah, which speak of the servant of God as wounded for our transgressions, but it is equally certain that the idea had not only found no general acceptance, but was entirely opposed to the feeling of the nation. From this time, therefore, Jesus began systematically to prepare the Twelve for His approaching violent death, returning to the sad topic at every opportunity; that a truth, so disagreeable and so contrary to their life-long ideas, might gradually become familiar to them; and that they might come to feel that it was in accordance with the divine plan of His kingdom. He had spoken of it before, but now threw aside all vagueness, and impressed it on them with the utmost distinctness; doubtless, explaining from their own Scriptures, as He did afterwards to the disciples at Emmaus, how "it was necessary that Christ should suffer these things, and then enter into His glory."[21] To revolutionize fixed belief is never easy, for the will has to be persuaded as well as the understanding. Hitherto, their minds had not been prepared for such a shock, and even yet, as we shall often see, they were very slow to give up their preconceptions, and realize what seemed so contradictory.

[a] Luke 24. 26. Matt. 16. 21—28. Mark 8. 31—38; 9. 1. Luke 9. 22—27.

It was impossible, however, to mistake the warnings of

their Master, however hard it might be to reconcile them with their own ideas. "He must go to Jerusalem," He said, "and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days, rise again." But so far were the Twelve from comprehending such an announcement, that Peter, too impulsive to wait for an opportunity of telling how much it distressed him, could not restrain his feelings. True to his character, he forthwith took Him by the hand, and led Him aside, to remonstrate with Him, and dissuade Him from a journey which would have such results. "God keep this evil far from Thee, my Lord and Master,"[h] said he. "You must not let such things happen. They will utterly ruin the prospects of your kingdom, for they match ill with the dignity of the Messiah. If there be any danger such as you fear, why not use your supernatural power to preserve yourself and us. It is not to be endured that you should suffer such indignities." It was the very same temptation as the arch enemy had set before Him in the wilderness: to employ His divine power for His own advantage, instead of using it, with absolute self-surrender, only to carry out the will of His Father. But, as ever before, it was instantly repelled. His quick, stern answer must have made Peter recoil afraid. "Get thee behind me," said He, "out of my sight, thou tempter; thou art laying a snare for me; thy words shew that in these things thou enterest not into the thoughts and plans of God, but considerest all things only from the ideas of men, with their dreams of ambition and human advantage." Peter still fancied that Jesus would be an earthly monarch, and that the proper course to take, under the circumstances, was to oppose force with force. He had yet to learn that the kingdom of his Master was to be established by suffering and self-denial.

It was a moment unspeakably solemn. Even the few faithful ones, and their very Coryphæus,—their leader and mouthpiece—while hailing Jesus as the Messiah, clung to the old national ideas, and could not reconcile them with His suffering and dying. He had rebuked the temptation which appealed to Him as a man, so strongly, to take the

ease and glory which invited Him, and to abandon the path of sorrow and lowliness, which might be the spiritual life of the world, but was His own humiliation and martyrdom. It had been driven away from His stainless soul, like darkness from the sun, but its power in the minds of even the Twelve, was only too clear. The truth, in all its repugnancy, must be forced on them more clearly than ever, that they might no longer continue with Him if it offended them; for He would receive none as His disciples who did not cheerfully embrace a life of self-denial and absolute devotion, even to the sacrifice of life, for His sake; with no prospect whatever of earthly reward. Nor would He even accept any one willing, from a mercenary spirit, to suffer here that he might receive a reward hereafter; for though such a reward was promised to those who were faithful to the end, absolute sincerity was required in His service. It must be the grateful, spontaneous expression of true love and devotion.

Even in such an outlying district as that of Cæsarea Philippi, numbers of the population—for there were many Jews in the region—had gathered to hear and see Him, and were near at hand at the moment. The test required of the Twelve was no less imperative for these: the "floor" must be thoroughly "fanned and cleansed" from all self-deception or designed hypocrisy.

Without giving Peter time, therefore, to excuse himself, and leaving him to the shame of His reproof, Jesus called the people and the Twelve round Him, and continued the subject on which He had begun to speak.

"I must needs suffer," said He, "before I enter into my glory, but so must all who would be my followers. If any man propose to be my disciple, he must literally follow me in my path of humiliation and sorrow. Whatever would hinder absolute devotion and self-sacrifice must be given up. He must make Me his one aim. All that stands in the way of undivided loyalty to Me—the love of ease, of pleasure, and even of life—must be surrendered. The hopes and prospects which engage other men must be abandoned, and in their stead he must daily take up the sufferings and self-denials which come on him for my sake, and bear them as a

man condemned to death bears the cross on which he is to die. I have set, and shall set him the example I require him to follow. Any one who thinks he can be my disciple, and enter into my kingdom hereafter, and yet bear himself so in this evil time as to escape suffering and enjoy life and its comforts, deceives himself. If he seek this life by denying my name, as he must needs do in this age to escape persecution, he will lose life eternal. But he who is willing, for my sake, to sacrifice his natural desire for pleasure and ease, and even to give up life itself, if required, for my name, will receive everlasting life when I come in my kingdom. Hard though this seem, it is the wisest and best thing you can do to comply heartily with it. What has a man in the end if, by denying me for his worldly interests, he gain even the whole world, and lose that life which alone is worthy the name? Unprepared for the eternal life of my kingdom, and without a share in it; with his breath he loses not only all that he has, but himself as well. What gain here will repay him for the loss of the life hereafter?

"I say this on good grounds, and with absolute truth. For, though now only a man like yourselves, I shall one day return in a very different form, with the majesty of my Father in heaven, and accompanied by legions of angels, to recompense every one according to his works. In that day each true disciple will be rewarded according to his loving devotion and self-sacrifice for my sake, and will be received by me, as the Messiah, into my kingdom. But I shall be ashamed of any one, and count him unfit to enter that kingdom, who for love of life and ease, or for fear of man, or from shame of my present lowly estate, or of my cross, has wanted courage and heart to confess me openly, and separate himself, in my name, from this sinful generation. It may be hard for you to think, as you see me standing here before you, that I shall one day come in heavenly majesty; but that you may know how surely it will be so, I shall grant to some of you, now present, a glimpse of this majesty, not after my death, but while I am still with you, that they may see me, the Son of Man, in the glory in which I will come when I return to enter on my kingdom."

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE TRANSFIGURATION.

CHAP. XLVII.

JESUS had now utterly broken with the past.[1] Hitherto He had been slowly educating the Twelve to right conceptions of Himself and His great work, and in doing so had had to oppose their stubborn prejudice, enlighten their ignorance, illustrate His meaning by significant acts, resist the sophistry and superficial literalism of the Rabbis, and lead the way to a higher spiritual ideal and life by His own daily example and words. They had now been in His society, however, for over two years, and, at last, had risen to a more just estimate of His dignity and of the nature of His work. He was henceforth free from the anxiety which had been inevitable so long as nothing had been definitely accomplished towards the perpetuity of His kingdom; for the confession of Peter, in the name of his brethren, was the assurance that that kingdom would outlive His own death, and spread ever more widely through an unending future. The joy of victory filled His soul, though the cross lay in the immediate future. Henceforth He bore Himself as soon to leave the circle with whom He had dwelt so long; now, preparing them for His humiliation by showing its divine necessity; now, uttering His deepest thoughts on the things of His kingdom; now, kindling their hearts by visions of the joy that would spread over all nations through the Gospel they were to preach. The future alone filled His heart and mind.

[1] Authorities for this chapter:—Hess, Leben Jesu, ii. 113 f. Ewald, v. 460, 461. Pressel, 186 ff. Lightfoot. Hor. Heb. ii. 243. Schleiermacher's Predigten, ii. 386; iv. 388. Rosenmüller's Scholia on New Test. *in loc.* Meyer, *in loc.*, &c., &c.

His gladness of soul at Peter's confession had, like all human raptures, been tempered by shadow. He had read the hearts of the Twelve, and saw that, though they had approached the truth in their conception of the Messiah,

they were still Jews, in linking with it the expectation of an earthly political kingdom, with its ambitions and human satisfactions. They had risen above the difficulties that blinded the nation;—the thought of Nazareth—Galilee—human relationship—lowly position—human wants—rejection by the Rabbis—familiar intercourse with the "unclean" multitude, and much beside, that had been a stumbling-block to others; but it was hard for them, in the presence of one who, to outward appearance, was a man like themselves, to realize that He was the only-begotten Son of God, and, like His Father, divine.

The announcement that He was to enter into His glory as Messiah, by suffering shame and death, not only shocked all their preconceptions; they could not understand it, and were sorely discouraged. They needed to be cheered in their despondency, and led gradually to accept the disclosure of His approaching humiliation. His promise that some of them, before their death, should see His kingdom come with power, was doubtless treasured in their hearts; but they little thought its fulfilment was so near.

Six days passed;[2] or eight, including the first and last: days full, doubtless, of sad and grave, as well as joyous, thoughts: sad that their Master spoke of suffering violence, and death: grave that He should not only have dashed all their hopes of a national regeneration, but should have painted their own future in colours so sombre; yet joyous, amidst all, in vague anticipations of the predicted spiritual glory of the New Kingdom, of which they were to be heralds. Little by little they would be sure to catch more of His spirit, from daily intercourse with Him, and learn imperceptibly how the purest joy and the noblest glory come from self-sacrificing love; how, in the highest sense, it is more blessed to give than to receive. We are told nothing of this sacred interval, but may well conjecture how it passed.

[2] Matt. 17. 1—13. Mark 9. 2—13. Luke 9.28—36

The scene of the Transfiguration, like that of nearly all other incidents in the life of our Lord, is not minutely stated. St. Luke, indeed, calls it "The Mountain," but gives it no closer name. It seems, however, certain, that the

CHAP. XLVII.

tradition which from the days of St. Jerome[3] has pointed to Mount Tabor as the locality, is incorrect. The summit of that hill—an irregular platform, embracing a circuit of half an hour's walk, was apparently from the earliest ages fortified, and Josephus mentions, about A.D. 60, that he strengthened the defences of a city built on it. Picturesque, therefore, though the hill looks, as the traveller approaches it over the wide Plain of Esdraelon, it could not have been the spot where Jesus revealed His glory, for it could not offer the seclusion and isolation indicated in the gospels. Nor is there any reason to think that the Twelve and their Master had left the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi, for St. Mark[4] expressly mentions that they did not start for Galilee till at least the day after.

It was, doubtless, therefore, on one of the spurs of Hermon, "the lofty mountain," near which He then found Himself, that the Transfiguration took place. Brought up among the hills, such a region; with distant summits, white in spots with snow, even in summer; its pure air; and the solitude of woody slopes and shady valleys, must have breathed an ethereal calm and deep peaceful joy, seldom felt amidst the abodes of men, on the wearied and troubled spirit of our Lord.

Taking the three of His little band most closely in sympathy with Him, and most able to receive the disclosures that might be made to them, He ascended into the hills towards evening, for silent prayer. The favoured friends were Peter—the rock-like—His host at Capernaum from the first; and the two Sons of Thunder, John and James; loved disciples both, but John, the younger, nearest his Master's heart of all the Twelve, as most like Himself in spirit. They had been singled out, already, for similar especial honour, for they only had entered the death-chamber in the house of Jairus, and they were, hereafter, to be the only witnesses of the awful sorrow of Gethsemane.

Evening fell while Jesus poured out His soul in high communion with His Father, and the three, having finished their nightly devotions, had wrapped themselves in their abbas and lain down on the grass, to sleep till called. Meanwhile

[3] A.D. 340—420. Tobler's Palæst. Descriptiones ex sæc. iv., v., vi.

[4] Ch. 9. 30.

their Master continued in prayer, His whole soul filled with the crisis so fast approaching. He had taken the three with Him, to overcome their dread of His death and repugnance to the thought of it, as unbefitting the Messiah; to strengthen them to bear the sight of His humiliation hereafter; and to give them an earnest of the glory into which He would enter when He left them, and thus teach them that, though unseen, He was, more than ever, mighty to help. He was about to receive a solemn consecration for the cross, but, with it, a strong support to His soul in the prospect of such a death. He was a man like ourselves, and His nature, now in its high prime, and delighting in life, must have shrunk from the thought of dying. The prolonged agony and shame of a death so painful and ignominious, must have clouded His spirit at times; but, above all, who can conceive the moral suffering that must have lain in the thought that, though the Holy One, He was to be made an offering for sin; that, though filled with unutterable love to His people, He was to die at their hands as their enemy; that, though innocent and stainless, He was to suffer as a criminal; that, though the beloved Son of God, He was to be condemned as a blasphemer? As He continued praying, His soul rose above all earthly sorrows. Drawn forth by the nearness of His Heavenly Father, the divinity within shone through the veiling flesh till His raiment kindled to the dazzling brightness of light, or of the glittering snow on the peaks above Him, and His face glowed with a sunlike majesty. Amidst such an effulgence it was impossible the three could sleep. Roused by the splendour, they gazed, awe-struck, at the wonder, when lo! two human forms, in glory like that of the angels, stood by His side—Moses[a] and Elijah—the founder, and the great defender of the Old Dispensation, which He had come at once to supersede and to fulfil. Their presence from the upper world was a symbol that the Law and the Prophets henceforth gave place to a higher Dispensation; but they had also another mission. They had passed through death, or at least, from life, and knew the triumph that lay beyond mortality to the faithful servants of God. Who could speak to Him as they of His decease, which He should accomplish

CHAP. XLVII.

at Jerusalem, and temper the gloom of its anticipation? Their presence spoke of the grave conquered, and of the eternal glory beyond. The empty tomb under Mount Abarim, and the horses and chariot of Elijah, dispelled all fears of the future, and instantly banished all human weakness.[5] That His Eternal Father should have honoured and cheered Him by such an embassy at such a time, girt His soul to the joyful acceptance of the awful task of redemption. Human agitation and spiritual conflict passed away, to return no more in their bitterness till the night before Calvary. His whole nature rose to the height of His great enterprise. Henceforth His one thought was to finish the work His Father had given Him to do.

[5] Ruskin's Mod. Painters, iii. 392.

Meanwhile, the three Apostles, dazzled, confused, and lost in wonder, gazed silently on the amazing sight, and listened. But it is not given to earth to have more than brief glimpses of heaven. Moses and Elijah had erelong finished their mission, and were about to return to the presence of God. Could they not be induced to stay awhile? Peter, ever first to speak, and hardly knowing, in his confusion, what he said, would at least try to prolong such an interview. "Master," said he, to amplify his words, "it is good for us to be here; let us gather some branches from the slopes around, and put up three booths, like those of the Feast of Tabernacles; one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." The cares and troubles of his wandering life, and all his gloomy forebodings for his Master and himself, had faded away before such brightness and joy, and, in his fond child-like simplicity, he dreamed of lengthening out the delight.

The Almighty had come down of old, to Mount Sinai, in blackness, and darkness, and tempest; but now, a bright cloud descended from the clear sky, like that from which He had of old spoken to Moses at the door of the Tabernacle, and overshadowed Jesus and the two heavenly visitors, filling the three Apostles with fear, as they saw it spread round and over their Master, and those with Him. It was the symbol of the presence of God, for He, also, had drawn nigh to bear witness to His Eternal Son. It was not enough that Moses and Elijah had honoured Him—a voice from the

midst of the cloud added a still higher testimony—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." Such a confirmation of the great confession of Peter was never to be forgotten. Almost a generation later, when he wrote his second Epistle, the remembrance of this night was as vivid as ever. "We were eye-witnesses," says he, "of His Majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.' And this voice which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount."[6] The brightness of a vision so amazing lingered in the memory of those who beheld it to the latest day of their lives.

[6] 2 Peter 1. 17, 18.

Sore afraid, the three fell on their faces, for who could stand before God? But the Voice had come and gone, and, with it, the Cloud and the visitors from the eternal world; and Jesus was once more alone. Calming their fears by a gentle touch, He bade them "arise and not be afraid," and they found themselves once more alone, Master and followers, with the stars over them, and the silent hills around. The divine glory had faded from His countenance, and His robes were once more like their own, but they could never forget in what Majesty they had seen Him; never forget, in His humiliation, that they had heard Him called "the beloved Son," by the lips of the Eternal Himself; nor could they ever hesitate whom to obey when they had seen Moses and Elias—representatives of the Law and the Prophets—withdraw before Him, and had heard Him proclaimed from the Cloud of the Presence as far higher than they. God Himself had said, in express words, or in effect, "He who is now with you alone, whose heavenly dignity you have seen, He whom you daily see in His wonted lowliness, is the same, even in this humiliation, as when in the bosom of the Father—'My Son, who pleases me always.' Henceforth receive the Law from His lips alone; henceforth, let all men hear Him only; He is the Living Voice of the unseen God."[b]

It was now morning, and the nine were awaiting the return of their Master and His friends. What the conversation was

CHAP. XLVII. between Jesus and the three, as they descended from the mountain, is not told us. There was, once more, freedom to speak, though, doubtless, they did so with a strange reverence, hardly venturing to talk of what they had seen and heard. Nor could they relieve their minds by telling the wonders of the night to the others of the Twelve, for even they were so little prepared for such disclosures, that Jesus commanded that the vision should be told "to no man, till the Son of Man be risen from the dead."

It illustrates the difficulty Jesus had to overcome, before new religious ideas could be familiarized to the minds even of those under His continuous teaching, that, though the three had often heard of the resurrection of the dead directly or indirectly from Jesus Himself,[7] they were at a loss to know what the words meant, as He now used them, and disputed among themselves about them. He had told the Jews that if they destroyed the Temple of His body, He should raise it again the third day; and only a week before the Transfiguration, on the day of Peter's memorable utterance, He had used almost the very words which perplexed them now. But though thrice repeated, they were still dark and mysterious.

The resurrection from the dead was, indeed, an article of the current Jewish theology, but it was so taught by the Rabbis, that the three found it hard to reconcile their previous ideas with the language of Jesus. They had heard from some of the preachers in the synagogues, that Israel alone would rise;[8] from others, that the resurrection would include godly heathen also,[9] who had kept the seven commands given to the sons of Noah; from some, that all the heathen outside the holy land would be raised, but only to shame and everlasting contempt before Israel;[10] while still others maintained, that neither the Samaritans, nor the great mass of their own nation, who did not observe the precepts of the Rabbis, would have part in the resurrection.[11] But if there was confusion as to who should rise again, there was still more contradiction between what they had always heard before, of the occasion and time of the resurrection; and the words that had fallen from Jesus. They had been

[7] John 2. 19. Mark 8. 31.

[8] Eisenmenger, ii. 904—907.

[9] Eisenmenger, ii. 908.

[10] Eisenmenger, ii. 909.

[11] Eisenmenger, ii. 915, 916.

trained to believe that all Israel would be gathered from the four quarters of the earth at the coming of the Messiah, and that the dead would be raised immediately after.[12] But before this resurrection, which would thus inaugurate the reign of the Messiah, Elias was first to come, and they still clung to this idea, in spite of all that Jesus had said[13] to remove it. They had always, moreover, heard the synagogue preachers say that the holy dead, when thus raised, were to take part in the kingdom of the Messiah, at Jerusalem, and once more become fellow-citizens with the living.

[12] Eisenmenger ii. 895.

[13] Matt. 11. 14.

At the mention of the resurrection, therefore, the thought instantly rose in their minds, how it could take place when Elias had not yet appeared, and how Jesus could speak of Himself alone as rising from the grave, and that on the third day. It was clear there must be some contradiction between His words and what they had always been taught. What could He mean by this rising from the dead? Only He could answer. To solve the point they asked Him, "How is it our Rabbis say that Elias must come before the dead shall be raised—that is, before the opening of the reign of the Messiah, which the resurrection is to announce? You speak of yourself rising, alone, from the dead, and that on the third day, and say nothing about this reappearance of Elias, which our Rabbis say is to be three days before the coming of the Messiah.[14] Is it wrong when they tell us that he will stand and weep and lament on the hills of Israel, over the desolate and forsaken land, till his voice is heard through the world, and that he will then cry to the mountains, "Peace and blessing come into the world, peace and blessing come into the world!"—"Salvation cometh, salvation cometh!"[15] and gather all the scattered sons of Jacob, and restore all things in Israel as in ancient times? They say that Elias will turn the hearts of all Israel to receive the Messiah gladly; how is this to be reconciled with your saying that the Messiah must suffer many things of the high priests and rulers, and be rejected and put to death?"

[14] Eisenmenger, ii. 696. Gfrörer, ii. 227. Langen, 210, 491. Schürer, 581.

[15] Eisenmenger, ii. 697.

"You are right," replied Jesus, "when you say that Elias must come before me, the Messiah. The purpose of

CHAP. XLVII. God, and ancient prophecy require it. But, as I, the Son of Man, now when I have come, have to suffer many things, and be set at nought and rejected, as the prophets have foretold, although I have given so many proofs of my heavenly mission; so has it already happened with him who was the Elias sent by my Father to prepare my way. He, like myself, has already come, but they knew him as little as they have known Me, and they have done to him as their hearts wished. He has suffered even to death, as I, the Messiah, must also suffer." Words so precise could not be misunderstood. They saw that He spoke of John the Baptist.[16]

[16] Matt. 17. 14—21. Mark 9. 14—29. Luke 9. 37—43.

Our moments of exaltation and rapture are only passing, and are often thrown into vivid contrast by the shadows that constantly linger beside the light. Jesus had left the other disciples at the foot of the mountain when He ascended it with Peter and the sons of Zebedee. The night, with its wondrous vision, had passed away, and He was now returning to His little band, who waited for Him in a neighbouring hamlet or village. The Jewish population scattered round Cæsarea Philippi had already heard of His arrival in their parts, and from various motives had gathered to see and hear Him. Hence no sooner was He noticed descending the slopes, than the whole multitude moved in His direction to meet Him. His sudden appearance was opportune. An incident had just taken place, which was still exciting no little dispute between some scribes and the disciples. A Jew in the crowd had a son—his only child—who had been afflicted from birth with the form of demoniac possession shown by epilepsy, joined with madness and want of speech. He had brought him in the hope that Jesus would heal him, and the disciples, who had often before wrought similar miracles when sent on tours through the country, had tried, in His absence, to heal the boy, and had failed. It was, indeed, a special case, for the lad was subject to violent convulsions, in which he foamed at the mouth, and gnashed with his teeth, and these had often endangered his life, by coming on him at times when he would have been drowned or burned had not help been near. His

whole body, moreover, was withering away under their  influence.

The failure of the disciples had, apparently, been connected with the excitement and agitations of the last week. Peter's confession in their name that they believed their Master to be the Messiah, had been sadly overcast by the shock to all their previous ideas given by His repeated intimations of His approaching violent death, and that a similar fate might overtake themselves. It had been a week of spiritual struggle, which Jesus designedly left them to undergo, though He knew, throughout, that one of them would yield to the trial. The nearer the time came for the journey to Judea of which He had spoken, and the less they could conceal from themselves that their devotion to Him was perilous to themselves, the more troubled and faltering grew their minds, and this inevitably affected them in all their relations. In such a hesitating and half-dispirited frame, they had no such triumphant faith as when they had gone out on their first independent apostolic mission and diseases and evil spirits yielded to their commands, in their Leader's name. Hence, they had the mortification not only of failing to work a cure, but of having to bear the cavils and sneers of the Rabbis, who were only too glad to seize a momentary triumph at their expense.

Meanwhile, the crowd showed Jesus all outward respect. The report of His wonderful deeds elsewhere had raised an excitement that was visible on every face. They greeted and welcomed Him, and were impatient to hear what He should say in this matter between His followers and their own doctors.

Turning to these, now in the flush of victory, Jesus disconcerted them by the simple demand to know the matter in dispute. But though they had been bold enough before the simple disciples, they were silent in the commanding presence of their Master.

Presently, the father of the unfortunate boy pressed through the crowd, catching fresh hope that the Teacher could, perhaps, do what the disciples could not. Kneeling before Him, he told all that had happened: how the

 disciples had been willing to help, but had failed. The whole story kindled Christ's sad indignation. He had been long with both disciples an l people, and after all His mighty acts and unwearied teaching, the former had at best a dark and wavering faith, and the latter were ready to reject Him entirely. "O faithless and perverse generation," cried He, "have ye, then, no faith at all? Must I be always present with you? Are all the proofs you have had of my help, when absent from you in body, forgotten? Have not I given you power over demons, and to cure diseases, and promised to be with you, that you might do such wonders? How could you show such want of faith as to doubt my promises, and think anything too difficult either to attempt or do, whether I am present with you or not? Will you never conquer your unbelief? How long shall I suffer you? Where is the boy? Bring him to me."

The boy was brought at once; but his eyes no sooner met those of Jesus than he was seized with a paroxysm of his malady, and fell on the ground, in violent convulsions and foaming at the mouth. Insane, dumb, and writhing on the earth: no sadder spectacle of the kind could well have been seen.

It was desirable that the crowd should have the whole incident impressed on their minds, and it was necessary for the permanent good of the agonized father himself that his faith should be strengthened.

"How long has he suffered in this way?" asked Jesus.

"From childhood, and often the spirit casts him into the water and into the fire, to kill him. But *if Thou canst do anything at all*, have compassion on me and him, and help us."

"*If Thou canst?*" replied Jesus, repeating his words in gentle rebuke.—"All things are possible to him that believes."

The intense emotion of the father could restrain itself no longer. His son's cure had been made to turn on his own confidence in the Healer, and that, even if felt, might not be deep enough to secure the favour so unspeakably wished. In his distress he could only break out into the pitiful cry

which has risen from unnumbered hearts since his day, "Yes, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief, if my faith is too weak." [c]

The crowd had been closing in from all sides on Jesus and the unhappy father and son, and further delay was to be avoided. Turning, therefore, to the boy, Jesus addressed the demon: "Speechless and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him." A wild shriek and a dreadful convulsion[d] followed, and then the boy lay still and motionless, so that he seemed dead. Many, indeed, said he was dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and, lifting him up, delivered him to his father, amidst the loudly-expressed wonder of the multitude at the mighty power of God.

The disciples, humbled by their failure, and unable, in their self-deception, to account for it, took the first opportunity, on their gaining privacy, to ask their Master to what it was owing. "It was simply," said Jesus, "because of your little faith;[e] indeed, I may say your want of faith, for I assure you if you had steadfast, unwavering faith, though ever so small, in my help, and in the power of God, no difficulty would seem too great for you to remove. You know how men call overcoming difficulties 'removing a mountain;'[f] I tell you that no mountain of difficulty would be so great—far less this one which foiled you—that it would not, at the word of firm trust in God, be moved out of your way."[17] "As regards this cure," He added, "you had to do with a kind of demoniac possession, which especially demands strong faith, for every attempt to overcome it without such faith as comes through prayer, so persistent that it neglects even the needs of the body for the time, must be fruitless.[g] It never is the greatness of the difficulty, but only the weakness of your faith, that stands in your way. Remember this in years to come."

[17] Schleiermacher's Predigten, iii 675.

Jesus did not stay long in the district of Cæsarea Philippi, but ere long turned once more towards Galilee, probably taking the road by Dan, across the slopes of Lebanon, with the wild reed-forests of the Huleh marshes on its south side, and on its north the huge mountain masses of Lebanon

Matt. 17. 22, 23. Mark 9. 30—32. Luke 9. 43—45.

and Hermon, and the broad, well-watered sweep of upland valley between.[18] He would thus most easily reach the hills of Galilee by an unusual route, and escape the publicity of an approach by the ordinary roads. It was the last time He was to visit the scene of so great a part of His public life, and He felt, as He journeyed on, that He could no more pass from village to village as openly as in days gone by, for the eyes of His enemies were everywhere on Him. The time He had previously given to teaching and healing was now devoted mainly to the special preparation of His disciples for the approaching end. Now and then, when special occasion demanded, He was as ready as ever to relieve the wretched, or to justify and repeat the words which He had so often delivered in the synagogues; but He usually shunned notice, not wishing, in the words of St. Mark, that any man should know. Avoiding the more populous places, and seeking by-paths among the hills,[h] where He would meet few and be little known, He made His way towards His old home, Capernaum. But He could no longer show Himself anywhere as He had done in the days of His popularity, for every word or act would have created new excitement, and given a fresh ground for accusation. He had resolved to go to Jerusalem and there meet His fate, but He could only do this by guarding against anything that might lead to His arrest in Galilee, for in that case He would be tried and condemned by a local court. Jerusalem alone must see the catastrophe, for it was the centre of the nation, the head-quarters of the priesthood and Rabbis—His enemies—and His death then would be distinctly their work: their open and formal rejection, as representatives of the nation, of the New Kingdom, and of Himself as the Messiah.

He stayed in Galilee, therefore, only as long as His purpose to go to Jerusalem permitted, and meanwhile withdrew from public life, to devote Himself especially to the Twelve and prepare them for His death, of which He seems to have spoken very often. One of the fragments of His intercourse with them, while slowly journeying onwards to His own town, has been preserved to us. "You have heard," said He, "how the multitudes express their amazement at the mighty power

of God shown in the miracles they have seen me perform, as in the case of the cure of the boy, after my descent from the mount. Let their words, in which they have thus acknowledged and magnified my acts as not less than divine, sink into your memories, and strengthen and confirm your faith in me as the Messiah. For I, the Son of Man—the Messiah—whose mighty works you have heard extolled so greatly, might easily have set myself at the head of the people, and led them by supernatural power, as they and their chief men wish, to outward national glory. But I will assuredly be delivered up and abandoned by these very crowds, and given over to the authorities, because I will not use my power for any but holy and spiritual ends. I will be betrayed into the hands of my enemies, and they will put me to death, but I shall rise again on the third day."

They were too full of their worldly hopes, which still mingled strangely with their vague recognition of their Master as the Son of God; too unwilling also to think earnestly on a subject so unpleasant, and so opposed to their ideas of the Messiah, to understand what He meant by these sad forebodings. He needed only to speak the word and the people would follow Him, and He might, by His miraculous power, which it seemed to them could not be used for a nobler end, set up the theocracy, as even John, apparently, had expected He would. Such language seemed part of His dark sayings, with a secret meaning which He would some day explain. They would fain have wished this explanation, indeed, at once, to calm their minds, but they hesitated to ask Him for it. He might, perhaps, if they did so, tell them something still more unpleasant, as He had done lately to Peter, in a similar case. Besides, they did not like to think about what they so much disrelished, and turned from matters which only filled them with gloom to others more in keeping with their wishes and hopes.

These offered themselves in the distinction Jesus often seemed to make in His bearing to one or other of their number.[19] Human nature is always the same, and jealousy was as rife in those days as now. However impartially He might treat them, their own characteristics made it impossible

[19] Matt. 18. 1—35. Mark 9. 33—50. Luke 9. 46—50

that He should be as intimate and confidential with some as with others. In some cases, as in the Transfiguration, lately, He had thought fit to take only a few of them with Him, and He seemed lately to have put especial honour on Peter, while His friendship for John was closer and more tender than for any other. All this, however, would have troubled the less favoured ones little but for their almost invincible belief that He would soon proclaim Himself as the Messiah in the Jewish sense, and found a great political kingdom. Everything was seen through this preconception, and any marks of preference were taken as indications of future position in the expected revolution. They assumed that, having been chosen from all their countrymen by Jesus as His closest followers, they would have the chief places in the new empire He was to found, but there was abundant room for jealousy in their individual claims to this or that prominent dignity. Accustomed to discuss everything openly, they naturally fell into warm controversy as to the just distribution of the great offices of state among them, when Jesus should be installed as Monarch of the world at Jerusalem.

In this dispute, however, their Master took no part. Nor, indeed, did they wish Him to do so, for they had fallen behind, in order that He might not hear them. They were ashamed to have Him know what occupied their thoughts, so little in harmony with His teaching and spirit. But He had noticed all, though He said nothing for the moment. Meanwhile they once more entered Capernaum.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### BEFORE THE FEAST.



THERE is something intensely human in the return of Jesus to Capernaum in the face of imminent danger.[1] It had been His home, and He was in all sinless regards a man. He longed to see the old familiar spots once more; the hills behind the town, among which He had so often wandered; the shady woods, and orchards, and vineyards, rich in foliage, or glowing with their ripening fruit in these summer months. He had often looked out from them on the sparkling waters, and, above all, had met among them the few whom He had gathered round Him in His long sojourn as their fellow-citizen. These He would now fain strengthen in their faith, before leaving them for ever.

[1] Matt. 17. 24—27. Mark 9. 33

His entrance into the town was marked by an application to Peter by the local collectors of the Temple tax, for its payment by his Master. Moses had provided funds for the erection of the Tabernacle, by the imposition of a tax of half a shekel on each male, payable at the "numbering of the people,"[2] and this, since the Babylonish Captivity, had been required yearly. It was equal, nominally, to about one and threepence of our money, but really to at least six times as much,[3] and was demanded from every Israelite of the age of twenty—even the poorest.

[2] Exod. 30. 11, 12. 2 Chron. 24. 6 Neh. 10. 32.

[3] Buxtorf, 577. Ewald, Alterthümer, 403. Michaelis' Das Recht Mosis, iii. § 173.

It was mainly from this heavy tax, paid as a sacred duty by every Jew, in whatever country, that the Temple treasury was filled with the millions of silver coins which were so strong a temptation to lawless greed. Crassus, Sabinus, and Pilate, in succession, had laid violent hands on this unmeasured wealth, and the reckless greed of Florus in

its plunder was the proximate cause of the last great war, which destroyed both Temple and city.[4a]

The Shelihim,[b] or "messengers," who collected this tax in Judea, visited each town at fixed times. In foreign countries places were appointed for its collection in every city or district where there were Jews—and where were they not? —the chief men of their community in each acting as treasurer, and conveying the amounts in due course to Jerusalem.[5] Three huge chests, carefully guarded in a particular chamber in the Temple, held the yearly receipts, which served, besides providing the beasts for sacrifice, to pay the Rabbis, inspectors of victims, copyists, bakers, judges, and others connected with the Temple service, and numerous women who wove or washed the Temple linen. It supplied, also, the costs of the water supply, and of the repairs of the vast Temple buildings.

The collection began in the Holy Land on the 1st of Adar—part of our February and March—the month of the "returning sun," and the next before that of the Passover. By the middle of it the official exchangers in each town had set up their tables, and opened their two chests for the tax of the current and of the past year, for many paid the tax for two years, together. They supplied the old sacred shekel, coined by Simon the Maccabee, for a trifling charge, to all who required it, for only that coin was received by the Temple authorities in homage to Pharisaic and national sentiment. At first everything was left to the good will of the people, but after the 25th, prompt payment was required, and securities, such as an under garment, or the like, were taken even from the pilgrims coming up to the feast.

It was very likely, therefore, that the time of grace had expired before Jesus reached Capernaum, so that the collectors—apparently respectable citizens—felt themselves justified in broaching the question to Peter—whether his Teacher did not pay the two drachmas? Perhaps they fancied He was of the irreconcilable school of Judas the Galilæan, who would pay no Temple tax so long as the Holy City was polluted by the heathen Roman.[6] His

[4] Jos. Bell. Jud. ii. 3. 3; 14. 6; 15. 6.

[5] Philo de Monarch. ii. p. 224. Jos. Ant. xviii. 9. 1.

[6] Lightfoot. Hor. Heb. ii. 252. Sepp, ii. 247.

enemies, indeed, very likely had insinuated that this was 
the case, to bring Him into suspicion with government.

Peter, ever zealous for his Master's honour, and, as usual, impulsive, no sooner heard the application than he answered affirmatively, on his own authority, and forthwith set off to find Jesus and report the matter to Him.

The exact time for payment had passed while Christ had been away from Capernaum, and the collectors were, doubtless, anxious to gather all arrears, to take with them to Jerusalem at the approaching Feast of Tabernacles in September. As if to show that not even the most insignificant matter that concerned His disciples escaped His notice, even when not bodily present with them, Peter no sooner appeared than his errand was anticipated by asking him his opinion, whether, when kings levy taxes or tolls, they exacted them from their own children, or only from their subjects?

"I think," replied Peter, "that only the subjects pay." "Then, of course," replied Jesus, "the king's children are free."

He wished to show that it would have been no failure of duty to leave the tax unpaid. Peter had already owned Him as the "Son of God," and it was for the Temple of God the impost was levied. It might, therefore, be just and proper to collect it from the nation at large, but it was not fitting to ask it from Him. "I am a king and a king's son; far more than any Roman or Herodian prince—for I am the Son of God, as thou hast said, and this tax is for my Father—God—the Great King; for His Temple, and thus I should be free."[c]

But, while thus maintaining to His apostle His rightful immunity, He was too prudent to urge it in public. He was not recognized as the Son of God outside the little circle of His disciples, but was only an Israelite, like others, to men at large, and, as such, was under the Law. It would have given ground of accusation and misconception had He hesitated to pay what all Jews paid cheerfully, as a religious duty.[d]

"It would not do for me, nevertheless," continued He, therefore, "to seem to refuse. They would not understand what I have been saying to you. Take your line, and go to

CHAP. XLVIII.

the lake; you need not wait till you catch a number of fish to make up the amount. Take the first that comes to your hook, and you will find in its mouth a stater,[6] which is twice as much as is needed. With it you can pay for me and for yourself."

The result is not given, but there can be no question that the command secured its own fulfilment.[7] No lesson could have been given more suited to benefit Peter and his companions. It taught them that, though they were His apostles, they could not claim exemption from labour for their own support, but yet quickened them to a firm repose on His watchful care, which could help them in any extremity.

[7] Trench's Miracles, 373—388.

They remained for a short time in Capernaum, and, happily, we have a glimpse of their quiet private intercourse; doubtless the picture of many such occasions.[8] He had delayed allusion to their hot discussion on the way till the quiet of evening and home.

[8] Matt. 18.1—35. Mark 9. 33, 50. Luke 9.46—50.

"Tell me," said He, turning to one of them, "about what were you disputing among yourselves on the road?" But the question received no answer, for all were alike ashamed of their unworthy jealousies and ambitions, and sat humbled and silent.

It was an opportunity for impressing on them, once more, the fundamental characteristic of His kingdom. Their daily work, as disciples, reminded them continually of their relations to it, and it already engrossed their thoughts, but they still failed to realize its purely spiritual character. The trials waiting them rendered it, thus, the more necessary to strengthen and support them beforehand, by correcting their misapprehensions, and elevating their tone.

In the Sermon on the Mount they had heard, if they could have understood it, how utterly His kingdom contrasted with all their previous ideas. They had been told, in effect, that moral fitness alone secured entrance to it, and that every external claim; whether the fulfilment of legal duties, or national privilege, or sacred calling—whatever had, hitherto, been supposed to give a title to membership in the old Theocracy, must be abandoned as worthless.[9] The reign of God, now proclaimed, was, in fact, only the homage of

[9] Baur, Die Drei Ersten Jahrh. 34. Schenkel, 153.

the soul, which had prepared itself, like a purified Temple, by humble repentance and holy life, to be a habitation of His Heavenly Father. Man must only receive from God: not pretend to give to Him.

Citizenship in the new kingdom of the Messiah was possible, only when no thought of claim obtruded.

It was thus, in effect, simply a reproduction of the spirit of Jesus Himself that was demanded, for the great characteristic which gave His life its matchless beauty, was His perfect divine humility. His lowly meekness had protected Him at the opening of His ministry, when tempted to self-exaltation: it had subordinated His own will, as by a law of His being, to that of God; it had opened His heart to the poor of His nation, cast out and despised by the religious pride of the day; it had made Him, throughout, the friend of the oppressed, the lowly, and the wretched; it had led Him, of His free choice, to despise all worldly honour, and it was now bearing Him, with a kingly grandeur, to the abasement of the Cross, that He might open to His nation, and to mankind, the way to peace with their Father in Heaven, and found a kingdom of holiness, truth, and love; to ennoble and bless the present, and expand into eternal felicity in the world to come.

It was vital, therefore, for His disciples, then, as now, that they should have the same heavenly temper. Without it, they could neither be efficient instruments in spreading His kingdom, nor have any share in it themselves, for it was, itself, the Kingdom—the reign of God, in the soul. The danger of self-elevation had been greatly increased from the moment when Jesus had accepted from them their formal ascription of the Messianic dignity, at Cæsarea Philippi. What seductive dreams lay for Galilæan fishermen in their being commissioned by the Messiah, as His confidential friends, and the first dignitaries of His kingdom! They had, indeed, heard Jesus speak of suffering a shameful death, as the immediate result of His proclaiming Himself as the Messiah, but when the mind is already preoccupied by its own views, it is incredibly hard to turn it. Even the most discouraging incidents are transformed into supports, or at least

CHAP. XLVIII argued aside. "Perhaps Jesus had only spoken thus to try them: perhaps it was one of the dark sayings He used so often." Their future dignity in the kingdom had been the topic of constant disputes and discussions, ever since the eventful day at Cæsarea Philippi. Had they not received spiritual graces and powers? For what had they gone through so much toil and danger? The reward could not be far distant. When it came, which of them should have the first place, and be the Minister of the New Reign?

They must be taught how utterly they deceived themselves.

Jesus had sat down in the house and called the Twelve before putting the question.[10] As they stood round Him,—for disciples of a Rabbi always stood when their masters sat down to teach them,—His first words scattered the whole unworthy dream of their hearts.

[10] Matt. 18. 1. Mark 9. 33. Luke 9. 46.

"Whoever of you," said He, "it matters not which, seeks to be before the other, and would distinguish himself in my Kingdom,[11] can only do so by cheerfully stooping to render even the humblest services to all the rest. He must show himself the willing servant of all, by doing whatever he can to serve the others. He must seek and find his greatness in being the humblest, and, therefore, the servant of all."[f]

[11] Hess, ii. 147.

Such language was well-nigh incomprehensible to men misled by worldly pride and ambition. They were thinking of themselves rather than of their Master; of receiving rather than rendering; of selfish ease and honour, rather than loving self-sacrifice, which He had often told them was the condition of their discipleship. He, therefore, resolved to bring them to a better frame, and this by an illustration rather than words. They knew, by experience, that even His most unpalatable and His darkest words, had a greater fulness of truth than their imperfect insight could realize. They had, doubtless, also, at times, misgivings respecting their dreams of the future, though they could not as yet lay these aside. Some of them had even gone so far as to ask Him the particular dignities He intended for each, that all future strife might be checked by an authoritative announcement.

Calling to Him a little boy of the household; lifting him

in His arms, and pressing him fondly to His breast,—as if 
to show how much nearer such an one was to Him than the Twelve standing at a distance round,—He drew their attention to the child. Love of children and of their childish traits, had always marked Him. A child, in His eyes, was a type of the grace so dear to Him—humility. It raises no overweening claims such as men advance, and accepts all its relations in life as it finds them; it adapts itself unconsciously to the lowliest and most ungenial lot, and finds happiness in it. It is the embodiment of dependence and need; of having nothing, and yet looking with simple trust to a higher than itself.

The Twelve noted His act with wonder, not knowing what it meant. He now proceeded to explain it.

"You see this child," said He; "I tell you solemnly, that, unless you abandon your present worldly ideas and ambitious thoughts, and become as simple and humble as it, and as lovingly dependent on God as it is on man, you shall not even enter my Kingdom, far less hold a high place in it. You see how this child has no thought but of perfect loving trust towards me; how it does not pretend to give the worth of what it receives, but opens its whole soul to me with artless innocence. Such sweet humility must be found in him who would seek to be greatest in my New Kingdom. To have the heart of a child is the fixed abiding condition of admission, of accepted service, or of honour. This child is willing to be the least of you all, and to serve you all, and, as I have said, whoever of you is like it in this, is the greatest among you. Your ambition must guide itself by this rule. Your strife shows that you have not yet rightly grasped the true nature of my Kingdom. It has no external dignities of power and rank, for it is a reign of principles, not a worldly dominion. All its members are therefore, brethren, on a footing of perfect equality. Any one may, indeed, distinguish himself beyond others, but not as in the Old Testament Kingdom, or as in that of the Messiah expected by the nation at large, by external honour and dignity. The honours of my Kingdom are won only by spiritual likeness to myself, your example and Master. Self-denial, self-sacrifice; the

 surrender of person and goods for the sake of the brotherhood; unselfish love—are the only path to the highest place."

He had now answered the question; but the sight of the child kindled another thought of no less moment. "You are looking for great events, and thinking with weak pride, of your claims as my followers, and may be tempted to slight and despise any one as spiritless, and beneath you, who is humble and unassuming, like this child on my knee. But let me tell you, that any one who honours and receives to his heart even a single child-like soul which delights in meekness and humility, as learned from me, has done the same in spirit, and will receive a like reward, as if he had received me myself, and done me personal honour. And since all that is done to me from an honest heart, is homage done to my Father who sent me, He Himself will show His approval, for even the humblest that lives, if he be my disciple, is great and honoured before Him."

The use of the words "in my name" had, meanwhile, recalled an incident of their recent journey to John, "the Son of Thunder." The Twelve had met, in their way, one casting out devils in the name of Jesus, though he was not one of their company, and instead of "receiving" him, had charged him to desist, because he was not of their own number. John now reported the matter, as if struck by the contrast between his own conduct and the counsel just given. "Forbid him not," replied Jesus,—"one who, though not of my circle, has yet attained so strong a faith in me that he works miracles through my name, needs not be feared as likely, by any sudden change, to speak against me." The want of forbearance had sprung from the want of humility, for pride is the special source of impatience. "He who is not against us," continued Jesus, "is for us." He whom John had treated so harshly had, at least, acted in His name, though, perhaps, with a very imperfect conception of His true dignity, or of the scope and greatness of His work. But he was very different from the blasphemers who did not shrink from speaking of the Holy Spirit as a spirit of evil. Moreover, the nearer the end approached, the

more needful it was to root out any signs of selfish or haughty feelings in the Twelve, and to lead them to look with kindly eyes on even a partial, if friendly relationship to Him. He wished them to realize that worthiness to rank in the New Society was shown by the goodwill, and trustful, child-like spirit, which led to devotion to Him, rather than by the measure of knowledge evinced. It was of great moment, at this time, to wake kindly and broad-hearted feelings towards any, who, while acting apart, were yet friendly. Were He once gone, it would be left to His disciples to continue His work, and it would depend upon them whether the Society, founded by Him, would be really the beginning of a new epoch in religion, or only a piece of new cloth sewed on an old garment; whether it would be a Jewish sect or a faith for mankind.[g]

"No one is to be lightly esteemed," continued Jesus, "who shows you the slightest mark of goodwill or friendship, were it only a drink of cold water, which all give so readily in these sultry lands—when given because you are my disciples. Even this will be rewarded by God as an act worthy His favour. Nor are you only thus honoured. So precious to me is the humble child-like spirit which you are disposed to despise, that if any one, by words or deeds, cause even one such soul who believes, to turn away from me; as you were in danger of doing when you forbade the stranger to cast out devils in my name; it would be better for him that a huge ass-mill-stone[h] were hung round his neck and he drowned in the depths of the lake, that he might be saved from so great a sin.

"Alas for the world-wide sorrow which the sins of many who will call themselves mine will cause, by keeping men from me! They will judge of me by these unworthy followers, and keep aloof from my kingdom. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise, for the evil that is in man will make even the name of religion a scandal. But how awful the judgment that awaits him who leads another from the way of life!

"I have said that it would be better for a man to die than that he should lead another astray. So, whatever may lead

CHAP. XLVIII.

you to sin, and thus bring scandal on my name, had much better be put from you, at any cost. If anything, therefore, however dear to you, incites you to sin, or keeps you from a godly life, thrust it from you. If the most precious members of the body—a foot or a hand—be cut off, to prevent death of the whole; how much rather, at any sacrifice, whatever sins of thought or act, which, by misleading others, would cause us to lose eternal life, and be cast into hell-fire, where their worm never dies, and the fire is not quenched![12]

[12] Isaiah 66. 24. Nork, 121. Schürer, 596.

"Every one cast into the fire, which the prophet thus calls unquenchable—every one, that is, who gives himself up to sin, shall certainly suffer the wrath of God, and be salted with fire, as the victims on the altar are salted with salt. But every one whose humble and steadfast faith in me has shown him to be, as it were, a pure and worthy sacrifice, fit to be laid on the altar of God, will, on his entrance into the heavenly kingdom of the Messiah, be salted, not with fire, but with the gift of higher grace, that he may endure unto life eternal.[i] Salt is of value to prevent corruption, and I have, before now, called you 'the salt of the earth;' because, if you are my true disciples, you will arrest the corruption that prevails among men, and make the community sound. How dreadful, however, if you, the salt, lose your savour. How will you regain it? If *you* turn to evil, and, through sloth or faint-heartedness, be untrue to your calling, how can your needful energy and efficiency be restored? You wish to be accepted at last as pure and worthy offerings to God, and to receive the gift of heavenly wisdom, which is everlasting life. To attain it, take care to guard the salt of true wisdom which has been already given you—the grace bestowed on you to be my disciples. Remember, moreover, that salt is the symbol of peace; be at peace among yourselves, and do not dispute and argue as you have been doing, lest you lose the power and fruits of my teaching."

Jesus had for the time digressed from His original subject—the humble and child-like among His followers—but now returned to it.

"Respecting those little ones of whom I was speaking—lowly, self-distrustful; as weak, yet, it may be, in faith, as little

children in strength—I would further say: Take heed[13] that ye do not slight or contemn any one of them, for I tell you so greatly honoured and so dear are they in the sight of God, that the humblest of them, for their very humility, are placed by Him under the loving care of the highest angels, who stand before Him, and see His face continually. Glorious though all angels be, only such exalted spirits—the princes of heaven—are thought worthy by God to minister to them and protect them.[k]

[13] Gfrörer, i. 374 Laugen, 331.

"To slight or despise even one such would, indeed, be to undo, so far, the very end for which I have come as the Messiah. You may, by doing so, turn him away from me, and so cause his soul to be lost. Much rather, if you meet with an humble spirit, still weak in the faith, which has gone astray, should you do your utmost to bring it back. For what shepherd feeding, it may be, a hundred sheep, in our upland pastures, if one of them stray, does not leave the ninety and nine, and set off into the hills to seek for the one that has wandered? And if he be so happy as to find it, I tell you, beyond doubt, he rejoices more over the one thus saved than over the ninety and nine that had not strayed. In the same way as it grieves the shepherd that even one of his sheep should be lost, so it grieves my Father in Heaven that one of these feeble, simple souls should perish, and it sorely displeases Him if it perish by the neglect or fault of any of my disciples.

"Let me pass to a distinct, yet related subject—the proper treatment of a brother in the faith who does you any wrong, by anger, envy, selfishness, or in any other way. Do not wait till he who has thus injured you comes to you to make amends, but go to him by yourself, and tell him his fault in private; that, if possible, you may get him to own it between you and him alone, and thus the scandal of difference between disciples spread no farther, and he be won for my New Kingdom, from which he would have been shut out, if, by refusing to be reconciled, he had shown no repentance. Seek his good, not your own justification merely: however wronged, think less of yourself than of his eternal salvation.

"If, however, he will not listen to your kindly remonstrance

CHAP. XLVIII.

and persuasion, go a second time to him, taking two or three witnesses with you, as Moses directed in other cases;[14] if, perchance, though he had not been moved by your single appeal, that of two or three supporting you, may lead him to see and acknowledge his fault. Their testimony, besides, will prevent his denial of his confession, should he make one, and afterwards repudiate it; while, if he refuse to listen and to admit his fault, and the matter must be brought before the Assembly, it will support and confirm at once the fact of your private visit for attempted reconciliation, and his stubborn refusal to hear even the two or three brethren you took with you on the second visit.

14 Deut. 19.15, in Sept.

"The Rabbis enjoin that the offender shall go to him whom he has injured, and own his fault, and that if he cannot thus procure forgiveness, he shall take others with him and seek to obtain it;[15] but I require that he who is wronged do this, that he may show his humility, and his patient love for a guilty brother.

15 Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ii. 254.

"You know, moreover, how a stubborn offender, who refuses private amends, is at last proclaimed as such, in the Synagogue and in the schools.[16] In my New Society, the congregation of the new Israel—the Kahal, or assembly of my followers, which will, hereafter, be called the Church, is to make a third final attempt to win the guilty one to repentance. You are to tell the facts to the 'congregation, and ask their godly offices, and they, through appointed representatives, will then seek to bring him to a right frame of mind. If, after all, he refuse to hear even the congregation, you are freed from further responsibility, and are absolved from all further religious relationship to him, as you have hitherto thought yourselves to be from the heathen, and from men of vicious life, such as the publicans. Not that you are to despise him, or refuse him the common offices of humanity, as your countrymen do to such classes, for you are still to love and seek to win him back, even till the very last, as your Heavenly Father does with the unthankful and evil.

16 Lightfoot, ii. 255.

"Let every offender think how solemn his position will be if thus obdurate before the congregation. I have already

given Peter—as the key-bearer of my spiritual Temple—the New Society I have founded—power to forbid and allow, to enact and define, what is needed for its future government and discipline, and have told you that what he ordains, so far as it is in harmony with the mind of the Spirit of God, will be confirmed by me in heaven, as if I were still with you on earth. This power I now extend to you all, my twelve faithful followers, and I give you, as a body, the same assurance of my confirmation of what you appoint for the government of my Society. Peter is, thus, only the first among equals. If the remedy I have pointed out be insufficient, as my Society extends, to meet such offences, I leave it to you to devise and apply what other means may seem needed, as the occasion demands. And that you may feel how formally and solemnly I now, before my departure, depute this power to you, I tell you, further, that if two of you shall agree on any matter, thus affecting the salvation of souls by the right discipline of my Society, or for other good ends, and shall ask my Father in Heaven to grant your desire, He will do so. For where two or three of you are gathered together in my name, I am in their midst, so that you need not doubt my promise that what even so few agree to ask my Father, in matters pertaining to my kingdom, will be granted."[1]

The Twelve had listened to their Master in reverent silence, but now the ever self-asserting Peter, still intensely Jewish in feeling, interrupted Him by a question conceived in the narrow and formal spirit of Rabbinism.

"Lord," said he, "our teachers tell us that if a person do us wrong we are to forgive him, a first, second, and third time, but not a fourth.[17] What sayest Thou? Would seven times be enough?"

[17] Babyl. Joma f. 86. 2.

"I am far from limiting my requirement to seven times," replied Jesus. "So far from that, if you be of a truly humble and child-like spirit, as you ought, you will forgive to seventy times seven—that is, any number of times. Let me show you my thoughts on this point by a parable.

"The subjects of my kingdom are like the servants of a certain ruler, with whom their lord would make a reckoning. So he called before him his revenue collectors—the

CHAP. XLVIII.

gatherers of his taxes and tolls, and demanded a settlement from them. Among others, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents—that is, thirty millions of shekels[m]—a sum it was hopeless for him to think of repaying. When the king heard how much he owed, he cried out that 'he *would* be paid,' and commanded him to be sold as a slave, with his wife and children, and all that he had, in payment of the debt.[n] On hearing this, the servant fell down before him, beseeching him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.' At this his lord was moved with compassion, and having ordered him to be unbound, not only gave him time, as he had asked, but, knowing he could never pay, forgave him the debt altogether.

"This servant, however, thus freely forgiven, went out and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him a hundred denarii[18]—less than the seven hundred-thousandth of what he had himself owed—and laid hold of him by the throat, saying fiercely, 'Pay what you owe.' The debtor thereupon fell down at his feet, as he had fallen at those of his lord, and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay thee.' But he had no pity, and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. His fellow-servants, seeing what was being done, were troubled at such hard-heartedness, and at the ill-treatment of the poor man, and came and told their lord all that had happened. Then the lord, having called the offender, said to him, 'O thou wicked servant, I forgave you all the great debt you owed me, because you asked me, though you sought only time, not forgiveness. Should not you, also, have had pity on your fellow-servant, as I had pity on you?' And his lord was indignant, and delivered him over to the torturers, to deal with him in the prison-house as they thought fit, till he should pay all that was due to him.

[18] At 7½d. a denarius, the whole debt was £3 2s. 6d.

"So, the forgiveness God has granted you of your great debt to Him, which you could never pay—the guilt of your sins—must lead you from your heart to forgive your brother man, not seven, but any number of times, the far smaller debt he may owe you; for if you do not forgive him, the

wrath of God will burn upon you at the great day, and you will be cast into everlasting punishment."

The transcendent loftiness of Christ's spiritual nature shines out through this whole episode. In His perfect humility He makes no personal claims. As, on every occasion, He declares simplicity and lowliness, like that of childhood, the mark of true discipleship; asks no higher or more signal acknowledgment, as a man, than was to be shown to all others; and ranks the friendly and kind treatment of any of His followers as if done to Himself. He demands no exclusive honour, but, on the contrary, every childlike spirit in the kingdom of God has in His sight a priceless value, however slight the instance by which its character was shown. The good deed done to the least of His people, is considered as personal to Himself. Neither now, nor at any time, does He bear Himself as one to whom all were to bow as servants; He takes His place in the midst of the little band round Him, as one who shares with them the highest and holiest joys. Within this circle we ever find Him strengthening and encouraging each to surrender himself for the good of the rest, and to cheer and honour especially, the humblest, the least esteemed, the most unpretentious; or, it may be, the mere workers who could not push themselves into notice. Meek and lowly in heart, He was no less of an infinite pity. The New Society, taught by His example and words, learned that they were to reproduce the spirit of little children, in that hitherto unimagined grandeur of humility which almost rejoices to suffer because it gives an opportunity to forgive.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

CHAP. XLIX.

THE seventh month, Tisri, part of our September and October—"the month of the full streams," and the autumnal equinox, had now come. Nisan, "the flower month," known of old as Abib, "the earing month," had seen the Passover pass without the presence of Jesus.[1] Ijjar, "the beautiful month," with its blossoming trees; Siwan, "the bright;" Tammuz; Ab, "the fruit month;" and Elul, "the month of wine;" had gone by in the journey to Tyre and Sidon, and to Cæsarea Philippi. Jesus had now been well-nigh half a year little better than an outlawed fugitive, hiding, in unsuspected districts, from His enemies. The fifteenth day of Tisri was the first of the great harvest feast of the year—that of Tabernacles—a time all the more joyful from its coming only four days after the Day of Atonement—the close of the Jewish Lent. Galilee was no longer open to Him, and the Kingdom was yet to be proclaimed in Jerusalem, the haughty city of the Temple, and of David. He knew that to go there would be, sooner or later, to die; but, with this clearly before Him, He calmly resolved, at the summons of duty, to transfer the sphere of His activity from the remote and secluded security of the north to the head-quarters of the Rabbis and priests. He had come into the world to be the Lamb of God, bringing salvation to His people and mankind by the proclamation of the New Kingdom, sealed with His blood; and Jerusalem alone, the seat of the dispensation He came to supersede, was the fitting scene for inaugurating the economy that was to take its place.

He was still in Capernaum when the great caravan of pilgrims began to pass to the feast. His relations, who, as

[1] John 7. 2—10. Luke 10. 1—16; 17. 11—19.

yet, had declared neither for nor against Him, had, apparently, come over from Nazareth to get Him to go up to Jerusalem with them. They could not have felt any hostility to One whose holy life had passed under their eyes, but, like the nation at large, they clung to what they had always been taught by the Rabbis, that the Messiah was to restore Israel to national glory, and to transfer the sceptre of universal power from Rome to Jerusalem. In their worldly wisdom they could not understand Him. It seemed to them unwise that He should stay in a corner of the land, if He wished to establish the kingdom of the Messiah. The Rabbis, as He knew, taught that it was to be set up in Jerusalem, and it was clear that it could be extended best from the Holy City, as a centre. Why did He not go up with them now, they asked, to the feast, that all who were friendly to Him, or who might become so, might see His miracles, and thus be constrained to support Him? "Nobody," they urged, "who aimed at being a great national leader, as they fancied He did, by His claiming to be the Messiah, could hope for success if He wrought all the "signs" which were to rally the people round Him, in an out-of-the-way place like Galilee. He had not been at the last Passover, or at Pentecost, when the people were gathered in the Holy City from all the land, and, indeed, from all the world; but He might, perhaps, repair this error even yet, if He went up now, and showed His power before the assembled myriads of Israel. If they accepted Him as Messiah, their very numbers would sweep away the heathen like chaff before the wind, especially when supported by miraculous help. It was unwise to keep back in this obscure and hidden district; He should show Himself openly to the Jewish world, which He could only do in Jerusalem."

"You think the present the fit moment for carrying out my plans," said Jesus. "You err. It is not yet the divinely appointed time for my doing this. You may go up openly before all Israel, at any time, because you and they are at one in not receiving me. They have no reason to hate you, nor have the priests and Rabbis, their leaders; but they hate me, because I, the Light of the world—the

CHAP. XLIX.

true Messiah—on whom all should believe, am a standing protest against them, that they sin in hating and persecuting me, as a transgressor of the Law and a blasphemer, because I have witnessed against their corruption and hypocrisy. They wish a political Messiah: I seek only spiritual ends. Go up, yourselves. The present time does not suit me to go with you." Their hope that He would lift the family to the highest honour, by heading a national Messianic movement, had come to nothing.

The object of His delay was to avoid going with the great Galilæan caravan, which entered the Holy City with public rejoicings. He would be recognized at once, and the multitude, in the excitement of the time, might again try to force Him into political action. Publicity and popular enthusiasm would have drawn the attention of those in power, and this He at present earnestly wished to avoid. His work was not to be rashly broken off by any imprudent act, for He needed all the opportunities that remained, to devote Himself to the Twelve and to His other followers. He could go up a few days later, and thus avoid the caravan. The feast lasted seven days, closing with the eighth as the greatest, and thus, even if He started later, He could mingle with the multitudes, and find out how men felt towards Him and His work, and proclaim the New Kingdom as He saw fit. The danger would be averted, and His great end better served. It was more in keeping with His spirit to avoid all appearance of courting popularity, and to deliver His great message of love in stillness; leaving its reception to its own charms, and to the lowly humility, self-denial, and gentleness, with which it was delivered.

Waiting, therefore, for some days, till things were quiet, He started with the Twelve, and a number of disciples, for Jerusalem.[2] Crossing Esdraelon, now stripped of its harvest, Engannim, the "fountain of gardens," saw Him once more on Samaritan soil. The caravans had perhaps gone over the Jordan, to travel down its eastern bank, and thus avoid the pollution of the direct route through hated Samaria.

He had been kindly received in the alien district on His former passage through it, northwards, but He was now

[2] John 7. 1—10.

going towards Jerusalem instead of leaving it, and this was enough to rouse the bitterness of the Samaritans. As was His custom, He had sent on messengers before Him to secure hospitality for the night, but it was at once refused. John and James—"the Sons of Thunder"—who had perhaps been the messengers, were especially indignant, and showed how little they had profited by the lessons of meekness they had so long been receiving. With the harsh Jewish feeling which regarded every one except a Jew as accursed, and hateful to God, and sought to establish the New Kingdom, not by mildness and love, but by force, they would fain have had fire called down from heaven to consume the unfriendly village.[a] They had likely spoken of Jesus as the Messiah, or, perhaps, His fame as such, may have already crossed the border. But the Samaritans expected from the Messiah that He would restore the Temple on Mount Gerizim, and instead of that, Jesus was going up to a feast in Jerusalem. John and James, however, could make no allowance. Elias had once called fire from heaven in his own honour:[3] how much more should men perish who had rejected the Messiah. The teaching of Jesus had not as yet softened the fierce Jewish spirit of the Twelve. Fanatical bitterness had struck its roots into their deepest nature. How utterly were they still wanting in patience towards the erring, and filled only with the thought of wrath and destruction! They had not yet realized that the kingdom of Jesus is one of faith alone: that it cannot be spread by compulsion and violence, but must spring from humility and love; that it must rest on free and honest conviction, and can grow strong and abiding only when a child-like spirit obeys and advances it.

[3] 2 Kings i. 9—18.

Deeply troubled, and no less offended, Jesus turned towards the fierce zealots, and rebuked their foolish and cruel harshness. They had heard Him say that He came to serve, not to reign; to suffer for others, not to inflict suffering on any; and He had but lately told them, once and again, how He was about to give Himself up to death for the good of the world. But though their ears had heard, and their conscience approved, their hearts had not willingly accepted the intimation, and hence they were ever exposed

CHAP. XLIX.

to fall back into Jewish fanaticism.[4] Rebuking them sternly, He taught them a needed lesson, by merely passing to another village.

[4] Schenkel, 172.

It was hard for the disciples to realize that, to be followers of Jesus, they must surrender themselves unconditionally to the will of God, and devote themselves to the work of the Kingdom, without a lingering tie to the world they had left. The circumstances demanded explicit statements of what discipleship thus involved, and hence, when fresh applicants for the honour presented themselves, Jesus was more frank and earnest, if possible, than ever before, in setting the cost before them. A Samaritan had come forward asking leave to follow Him; as if to show that all were not like the villagers who had treated Him so unkindly. It may be he had very imperfect ideas of what his wish implied, but Jesus did not leave him in doubt. He told him all His own position, and all that awaited His disciples: that He had forsaken house and home for ever, and that the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, had a lot to be envied compared with His.

The seeming harshness of His replies to two others, perhaps Samaritans, who also asked leave to follow Him, is explained by these facts. From the first He had held out no rewards, but predicted only privation and suffering to His disciples, but these were closer at hand now than they had been when He called the Twelve. To follow Him had come to mean, literally, to leave all, and to make up one's mind to the worst. He was a mark for the fiercest hatred of those in authority, and His circle could not escape suffering with their Master. The most utter, unqualified devotion, the purest spirit of self-sacrifice, were required. "Let the dead; those who will not receive the preaching of the Kingdom, bury their dead," said He, to one who wished to bury his father. "Surrender yourself utterly to God." Another, whose want of the supreme resolution demanded, showed itself in a request to be allowed to bid farewell to his friends, was told that it could not be. "The prayers, the tears of your circle at home, might shake your decision to consecrate yourself wholly to the kingdom of God."[5]

[5] Schenkel, 173.

It was now many months since the sending out of the Twelve on their first missionary journey. It had been necessary to confine them to strictly Jewish ground, to avoid offence, and from their own defective sympathy with other populations. Both difficulties were now, however, in part, removed: the openly hostile attitude of the leaders of the nation made it unnecessary to consider their prejudices; the Apostles had, in some degree, gained broader charity, and, above all, the near approach of the end made it desirable that the full grandeur of the New Kingdom, as intended for all men alike, should be clearly shown before its founder's death, that there might be no possible misconception afterwards. Jesus had always yearned to proclaim the words of life to the different races whom He saw around Him. A boundless field opened itself for the missionary labours of any number of disciples, and He now had round Him a larger number than before, whom He could thus send out. He determined, therefore, to send out no fewer than seventy disciples; in the Jewish opinion, the number of the nations of the world. The lesson could not be doubtful. It was a significant announcement that, for the first time in the history of man, a universal religion was being proclaimed.

Samaria, through which He was passing, had, naturally, the first claim on the new enterprise, and that all the more from the proof of its need of spiritual light, furnished by the inhospitality shown to Him who was bringing that light to its borders.

The Seventy, separated into pairs, were detailed to carry the message of peace to all the habitations of the race they had formerly, as Jews, so hated. They had grown up from childhood in the narrowest Pharisaic spirit, and were still, in some measure, under its spell. The Rabbis did not permit any close intercourse of Jews with heathen or Samaritans; they were forbidden to enter their houses, or return their greetings, and, still more, to join them in a common meal. But the grand maxims of charity and love which Jesus had so often taught, were now to be put in practice. Jewish exclusiveness was to be done away for ever, by the proclamation of a SAVIOUR OF MANKIND. His messengers, therefore,

CHAP. XLIX.

while losing no time on the way by long and formal salutations, were to bear themselves with loving trust even among hostile populations, taking neither purse, nor wallet, and wearing only the sandals of the poor—to show their lowly bearing, and humble personal claims. The instructions given formerly to the Twelve, were, in fact, repeated; instructions then as amazing as if Hindoo Brahmins of to-day were sent forth with orders to care nothing for caste, and associate freely, and even eat, with abhorred Pariahs and Sudras. The Seventy were to join, without hesitation or reserve, in the household life of the hated Samaritans, and eat with them at their tables! No other condition of spiritual brotherhood was to be required than that of a believing reception of the salvation through Jesus.[6]

[6] Schenkel, i. 162.

Only one incident of the journey of Jesus Himself is recorded, but it is wondrously significant. His repulse at the border village had changed His route, for now, instead of going straight south, He turned eastwards, and followed the road that runs between Samaria and Galilee,[7] [b] down the ravines, to the fertile meadows of Bethshean or Scythopolis, where a ford or bridge led over the Jordan. The route stretched thence, southwards, to Jericho.

[7] Luke 17. 11—19.

The calm rebuke of John and James for their anger and revengeful spirit, and the return of good for evil in the sending forth the Seventy to preach the Kingdom throughout the Samaritan region, had shown that the rudeness He had received had not ruffled His spirit. He was now to add another proof of His serene and loving nature. As they approached a border village, a dismal spectacle was presented. Ten men, hideous with leprosy, ranged themselves at a distance from the road, as similar sufferers still do before their huts at the Zion Gate at Jerusalem. It was a law in Samaria that no leper could enter a town,[8] and hence the unfortunate creatures accosted Jesus while He was still outside the village. Misery had broken down all prejudice of race or faith, and had brought together even Jew and Samaritan, as it still does in the leper haunts of Jerusalem and Nablous. The ten had heard of Jesus, and the wonderful cures He had performed on such as they, and no sooner saw Him than

[8] Ant. ix. 4. 5.

they broke out with the common cry—"Tamé! Tamé! Unclean, unclean! Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." It was a sight that might have touched any heart, for it must have been like that which still repeats itself to passers-by at the leper quarters elsewhere—a crowd of beggars without eyebrows, or hair on their faces or heads, the nails of their hands and feet, and even a hand or a foot itself, gone from some; the nose, the eyes, the tongue, the palate, more or less wanting in others.[9] As they stood afar off, their lips covered with their abbas, like mourners for the dead; for they were smitten with a living death, which cut them off from intercourse with their fellows; the pity of Jesus was excited, and without even waiting to come near, sent hope to them in the words, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." They knew what the command meant, for no one who was not cleansed could approach a priest, and as they moved off, the disease left them. The Samaritan would have to show himself to a Samaritan priest; the nine Jews needed to go up to Jerusalem for an official certificate of health, at the Temple; but it was the least either the one or the others could do, when they felt their cure, to return, if only for a moment, to thank their benefactor for a deliverance from worse than death. But the nine Jews were too much concentrated on themselves to think of this. Only one, the Samaritan, showed natural gratitude, and came back and threw himself at the feet of Jesus, in humble acknowledgment of the goodness shown him. "Were there not ten cleansed?" asked Christ; "where are the nine? The only one who has returned to give glory to God is this Samaritan, whom Jews call a heathen, and an alien from Israel. Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." The Twelve had received another lesson of universal charity.

[9] Röhr, Palaestina, 83. Thomson, 651

The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three great feasts which every Jew was required to attend. It was held from the fifteenth of Tisri to the twenty-second, the first and last days being Sabbaths—the latter "the great day of the feast." It commemorated, in part, the tent-life of Israel in the wilderness, but was also, still more, a feast of thanks for the harvest, which was now ended even in the orchards

CHAP. XLIX.

and vineyards. Every one lived in booths of living twigs, branches of olive, myrtle, fir, and the like,—raised in the open courts of houses, on roofs, and in the streets and open places of the city. All carried in the left hand a citron,[c] and in the right the lulab—a branch of palm woven round with willow and myrtle. On each of the seven feast days the priests went out with music and the choir of Levites, amidst the shouts of vast multitudes, to draw water in a golden vessel, from the spring of Siloah; to be poured out at the time of the morning offering as a libation, on the west side of the great altar,[10] amidst great joy, singing and dancing, such as was not all the year besides. On the evening of the first day a grand illumination, from huge candelabra which shed light far and near over the city, began in the Court of the Women,[d] and torch dances of men were kept up, in the court, with music and songs, till the Temple gates closed.[11]

10 John 7.37.

11 Bibel Lex. and Winer, R. W. B. "Laubhuttenfest." Lightfoot, iii. 310 ff.

12 ἐζήτουν αὐτον.

The Jewish authorities kept looking for Jesus,[12] for they had counted on His attending the great national holiday, and thus coming within their reach, but, to their disappointment, He appeared not to be in Jerusalem. So their officers reported. His absence had, indeed, been noted by the multitude, and everywhere He was the subject of conversation and discussion. The Rabbis and higher Temple dignitaries had shown themselves so hostile to Him that no one dared to mention His name except in whispers, for fear of excommunication, but He was more or less the one engrossing topic of the bazaars and the booths of the feast. Opinions were divided. Some, who judged for themselves, maintained that He was a good man, and that it would be well for all to follow what He taught: others, and they, no doubt, the great majority, who took their opinions from their religious leaders, hotly and loudly denounced Him as unsafe and dangerous; a breaker of the Sabbath; for had He not, on His last visit, healed a blind man on the holy day?

Meanwhile, when the feast was at its height, Jesus suddenly made His appearance in the Temple porch, where the Rabbis taught, and, calmly taking His seat, began to teach

the crowd that soon gathered round Him. It is not told us when He had arrived, or whether He lived for the week, like the crowds, in a succah or booth of His own, or of a friend: or whether He carried the lulab and citron, as others did, round the great altar, or attended only to the graver matters of His New Kingdom. We only know that He showed Himself openly in the city and in the Temple courts, under the very eyes of His enemies. Loyalty to His work had demanded His delay in coming, for His life was still needed to proclaim the New Kingdom in Jerusalem as well as in Galilee, if it were permitted Him. He had lived mostly in the latter, but Jerusalem was the religious centre of the nation, and all that happened, or was spoken publicly during one of the great feasts, would be wafted, like seeds, to every land. As a Jew, moreover, He had a tender love for the City of David, and of a still greater, His Heavenly Father—a spot dear then, as now, beyond expression, to every Israelite. Before it was for ever too late, He would fain bring its children to listen to the things of their peace, which He alone could tell them.

The Jewish authorities were astounded, and hardly knew what course to take. Coming, themselves, to listen to the fearless intruder, they were still more amazed at what they heard. They could now understand how it had been said of Him that He bore Himself as one who had authority direct from God; and not like the Rabbis, who never spoke without quoting an authority; and how He had made so great a popular impression. Art and study of effect had no place in His discourses; for the copiousness and finish of a mere rhetorician were wanting. His resistless power lay as much in Himself as in His words: His calm dignity, and His look of mingled purity and tenderness, confirming all He said, as by a holy sanction. He did not merely treat of general religious and moral truths, but spoke of quickening facts and realities. The advent of the Kingdom of God, its nature, and its glorious future, but above all, His own position in it; as its Head and King, as He in whom the Father revealed Himself, and in whom men were to find salvation, were the substance of His addresses. They were, in fact,

CHAP. XLIX.

essentially a testimony respecting Himself, and a self-revelation. There were no sudden and violent bursts, no brilliant flashes, but an atmosphere of more than earthly peace rested over both speaker and words, from first to last.[13] The most amazing claims were uttered, not only without a trace of self-consciousness, but with the lowliest humility. It seemed as if all He said was only what became Him.

[13] Ullmann, 168, 169.

But with all His humility, and in addition to His transcendent dignity, the fulness of His knowledge was no less remarkable. He was intimately familiar with all the sacred books, and even with the honoured extra-canonical writings. He met and confuted opinions of the Rabbis by the subtlest and most original references to Scripture; He pierced beneath its letter to the spirit; He distinguished with the keenest acuteness between the Law, as given by God, in its scope and essence, and the Pharisaic traditions; and He clothed in the simplest language, the profoundest spiritual truths of both the Law and the Prophets.[14] Such a phenomenon was inexplicable.

[14] Keim's Christus, 12.

The authorities, in amazement, could only ask themselves how He could have such learning, when He had never studied in the schools. Where could He have got this power of handling the Scriptures like a great Rabbi? He was a Galilæan, and had never attended any Teacher. Like the old prophets He must have been "taught of God," and it was evident that the people did not hesitate to recognize Him as one, though the official classes were fain to decry Him, and knew the effect of a harsh and contemptuous name. "How can a common man like this," said they, "who has never been educated as a Rabbi, possibly understand the Scriptures?" Against their consciences, they tried to depreciate both Him and His teaching.

Had they shown only curious or friendly wonder, Jesus would, perhaps, have remained silent. But it was different when they were trying to excite doubt and suspicion against Himself and His words, as it was clear they were doing from what He saw and heard. A deputation from the authorities having at last given the opportunity of reply by a direct interrogation, He seized it at once. "Beyond doubt," said

He, to paraphrase His words slightly,[15] "I have not learned in your schools what I teach. But my doctrine is not a mere invention of my own: it is not mine at all, but His who has sent me. I only repeat what He instructs me to make known in His name. You speak as if religious truth were a mere matter of tedious study. But it is to be learned by obedience, rather than from books, as your own Wisdom of Sirach tells you, 'He that keepeth the law of the Lord getteth the understanding thereof.'[16] It needs a heart willing to be taught of God to comprehend it; a heart at one with God, and eager to do His will, however contrary to one's own. He whose soul has no love of truth, no oneness with God, cannot recognize His truth even when he hears it. If you had true love to God and desired to know His revealed will, and to carry it out in your lives, you would know from whom I have received the doctrine I teach, by its power to purify and calm the heart, and by the hopes it gives for the world to come. That I do not advance a doctrine of my own invention is, moreover, clear from this, that if I did so I should seek my own honour and advantage. But if I seek no honour for myself, but only for Him by whom I have been sent, it shows that I am worthy of trust. To strive only for the glory of God is in itself a proof of being His true mouthpiece and messenger, and I leave you to say whether this does not apply to me. Have I ever sought honour from men and not rather the honour of my Father alone? Have I not always professed to have received all from my Father? I have had no personal end, and it is, therefore, incredible that I should be a deceiver, seeking to lead men astray."

[15] Meyer, Luthardt, Tholuck, Lücke, Rosenmüller *et al. in loc.*

[16] Wisdom 21. 11.

The cavil of the Rabbis thus answered, Jesus forthwith took the offensive. "You charge me," said He, "with not *knowing* the Law: you do not *keep it*. You boast of your zeal for it, and affect indignation for my having, as you assert, broken it by healing a blind man on the Sabbath; an indignation so real that you would put me to death if you could. But this, itself, is a violation of the Law, for the Law commands love to our neighbour above even the Sabbath, and that should be my perfect defence." He knew that the authorities had never forgiven Him His answer, at His

CHAP XLIX.

former visit, to their charge of having broken the Sabbath by the miracle at the pool of Bethesda, and that they were plotting His death, even now, on account of it.

Meanwhile, the crowd, perhaps knowing less than He of the secret designs of the hierarchy, or affecting to deny them; believed, or feigned to believe Him in no danger, and broke out in angry repudiation of such a charge. They had heard the Rabbis often ascribe His works to Beelzebub, and fell back on the blasphemous slander as an explanation of His language. He must have a devil.[17] The Rabbis were right. He was crazed. The evil spirit that spoke through Him was trying to stir them up against their spiritual guides.

[17] John 7. 20.

Without noticing the interruption, Jesus continued, addressing the crowd at large, "Your leaders are plotting to kill me for doing an act of mercy on the Sabbath. But all of you are in a measure guilty by your sympathy with them; shown in your unrighteous anger at me on account of it, on the same ground. But that you may see the injustice of your charge, let me remind you of what often takes place in regard to circumcision. That rite was commanded by Moses, though it dates from Abraham, and you are so strict in performing it at the prescribed time, the eighth day, that you circumcise a child even on the Sabbath, if necessary, that the law of Moses in this particular be not broken. Do you think the Sabbath was first given on Sinai, and hence give the older law of circumcision the preference? Or have you, of your own accord, decided that in some cases the law of the Sabbath must give way to other parts of the law? You accept the saying of the Rabbis, that 'circumcision drives away the Sabbath.' But, if you perform circumcision, with all the work it involves, on the Sabbath, without breaking the day, how can you be angry at me, if I broke it by a work of mercy so much more beneficial to its object as the making a blind man whole on it? Never judge by appearance, but look beneath the surface and judge righteously."

But now some joined the crowd who knew of the plots of the authorities against His life,[18] and could not understand

[18] Verse 25.

how He should be allowed to teach thus openly without interference. His words and bearing had softened their prejudice, and made it seem possible that the authorities had become convinced that He was, in reality, the Messiah, and sanctioned this course. But the mere suggestion, in the shape of a question, was enough to raise a hot dispute among theologians so keen. "Do not the Rabbis tell us," said some, "that the Messiah will be born at Bethlehem, but that He will be snatched away by spirits and tempests soon after His birth, and that when He returns the second time no one will know from whence He has come?[19] But we know that this man comes from Nazareth. Our chief men, if they choose, may accept Him as the Messiah; we will not."

[19] Lightfoot on Matt. 2. 1.

Jesus was still sitting in the Temple porch, teaching, but, on hearing what was thus openly said in disparagement of His Messiahship, He broke off His discourse, and called out in a louder voice than He had hitherto used, to the noisy disputants—"You do certainly, in your own sense, know who I am, and whence I come, but in a higher sense you know neither. I come forward as the Messiah, not of myself; I am sent by One whom you cannot truly know, so long as you cling to your worldly ideas of the Messiah—by One who, alone, has the right and power to send forth the Messiah, and has done so in sending me. I know Him, though you do not, for I have come forth from Him, and no other than He has sent me."

His hearers at once saw what was implied in this. It was no less than a claim to have come forth from God, and was equivalent to asserting divine dignity, for He said nothing of being only an angel, or embodied heavenly spirit, or prophet raised from the dead. He had once before, after the very miracle for which He had been so assailed, justified Himself by saying—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;"[20] and the words had sounded so blasphemous, that the authorities had sought to kill Him, because He had not only broken the Sabbath, but had said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. The hostile part of the crowd rightly saw a similar claim repeated now, and with the wild fanaticism of their race in that age, proposed to lay

[20] Ch. 5. 16.

 hold of Him, and hurry Him outside the city on the instant, to stone Him, as the Law against blasphemy enjoined. But His hour had not yet come, and whether from fear of the Galilæans at the feast, or from other reasons, their rage died away in words.

The fame of His miracles in the north had preceded Him to Jerusalem, and was, now, further spread by the reports of the Galilæan pilgrims, and deepened the effect of His cure of the blind man at His last visit—the very bitterness of His enemies having kept it from being forgotten. Numbers had thus been impressed in His favour, even before His appearance at the feast, and not a few of these were now so far won over by the still higher evidence of His wondrous words, and whole air and bearing, that many felt constrained to admit His claim to be the Messiah. Miracles had always been held a characteristic of the Messiah's advent, and even the bitterest enemies of Jesus did not deny His supernatural power. It was evident that He was rapidly gaining ground, and the hierarchy knew that if He rose they must fall. If they could arrest Him, while His adherents had not as yet ventured on an open movement in His support, all might be well. The Pharisees, therefore, and the Sadducean chief priests—mortal enemies at all other times—hastily issued a warrant to apprehend Him, and sent some of the Temple police to carry it out.

The sight of the well-known dress of these officials, on the outskirts of His audience, told the whole story to the quick intelligence of Jesus, and with that readiness which always marked Him, He, forthwith, began a calm and clear anticipation of His near death.

"I shall be with you," said He, "only a short time longer, for I shall soon return to my Father in Heaven, who sent me. Then the days will come when sore distress will fall upon this city and land for rejecting me, and you will seek help and deliverance from the Messiah, that is, from me, but ye will not find me then. Persecuted and put to death now, ye will then long for me in vain, when for ever gone from you, for where I shall then be you cannot go, to fetch me from thence as your Saviour."

"What does He mean?" asked those round; "will He go to our Greek speaking brethren—the Hellenists in Egypt, or Asia Minor, or some other of the lands of the Gentiles?"[e]

The day passed without any attempt to apprehend Him, nor was He disturbed again during the week. The last day of the feast,[f] known as "the Hosanna Rabba," and the "Great Day," found Him, as each day before, doubtless, had done, in the Temple arcades. He had gone thither early, to meet the crowds assembled for morning prayer. It was a day of special rejoicing. A great procession of pilgrims marched seven times round the city, with their lulabs, music, and loud-voiced choirs preceding, and the air was rent with shouts of Hosanna, in commemoration of the taking of Jericho, the first city in the Holy Land that fell into the hands of their fathers. Other multitudes streamed to the brook of Siloah, after the priests and Levites, bearing the golden vessels, with which to draw some of the water. As many as could get near the stream drank of it amidst loud chanting of the words of Isaiah—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," "With joy shall we draw water from the wells of salvation,"—rising in jubilant chants on every side. The water drawn by the priests, was, meanwhile, borne up to the Temple, amidst the boundless excitement of a vast throng. Such a crowd was, apparently, passing at this moment.

Rising, as the throng went by, His spirit was moved at such honest enthusiasm, yet saddened at the moral decay which mistook a mere ceremony for religion. It was burning autumn weather, when the sun had for months shone in a cloudless sky, and the early rains were longed for as are the monsoons in India after the summer heat. Water at all times is a magic word in a sultry climate like Palestine, but at this moment it had a double power. Standing, therefore, to give His words more solemnity, His voice now sounded far and near over the throng, with soft clearness, which arrested all:—

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink,[21] for I will give him the living waters of God's heavenly grace, of which the water you have now drawn from Siloah is only, as your Rabbis tell you, a type. He that believes

[21] Lightfoot, ii. 323.

CHAP. XLIX.

in me drinks into his soul from my fulness, as from a fountain, the riches of divine grace and truth. Nor do they bring life to him alone who thus drinks. They become in his own heart, as the whole burden of Scripture tells,[22] a living spring, which shall flow forth from his lips and life in holy words and deeds, quickening the thirsty around him."[g] He meant, adds St. John, that this quickening missionary zeal and power would first show itself after the descent of the Holy Spirit, when He Himself had entered on His glory. Streams of holy influence, like rivers of living water, would go forth from His Apostles through the Spirit's overflowing fulness in their souls.

[22] Isaiah 44. 3; 55. 1; 58. 11. Ez. 47. 1, 12. Zech. 13. 1; 14. 8. Joel 3. 1—23.

The whole discourse was now ended. The impressions it had left were various. Many who had listened to it, whispered to their neighbours that they were sure "This was the Prophet to come before the Messiah." Others maintained He was the Messiah Himself, but this opinion led to hot dispute. "Does the Messiah, then, come out of Nazareth?" asked the incredulous Rabbinists. "Does not the Scripture say that the Christ comes of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" But the division in the crowd was the safety of Jesus, for those who were fiercest to lay hands on Him as a blasphemer and Sabbath-breaker were afraid to do so, so strong did the party seem which supported Him.

The Temple police sent to arrest Him had remained near, to the close, to watch their opportunity. But the power and majesty of His discourse, which had spell-bound so many others, had overawed and impressed even them, so that they dared not touch Him, and went back to their masters empty-handed. To the angry demand for an explanation, they could only answer, "Never man spake as this man speaks." The Pharisees in the Council—the special guardians of the public orthodoxy—professed themselves shocked at such disloyalty on the part of men entrusted with the commission of the high ecclesiastical court. "How can you be so led away? Do you not see that only some of the ignorant rabble believe in Him? Have any men of position—any members of the Council, or any Rabbis—done

so? They are qualified to judge on such matters; but as for the rabble, who have accepted such a transgressor as the Messiah, it shows that they do not know the Law, and are therefore accursed of God."

One faint voice only was heard in the Council in hesitating defence of Jesus. It was that of Nicodemus—His visitor by night on His first appearance. "I know, sirs, you are zealous for the Law, and rightly condemn those who are ignorant of it. But does the Law sanction our thus condemning a man before it has heard him, and found exactly what he has done?" He had not moral courage to take a side, but could not withhold a timid word. Like all weak men, he found little favour for his faint-hearted caution. "Are you, also, like Jesus, out of Galilee," they asked, "that you believe in Him; only ignorant Galilæans do so? Search the Scriptures, and you will see that no Galilæan was ever inspired as a prophet by God: the race is despised of the Highest, and is it likely it should give Jerusalem the Messiah?"

In their blind rage they forgot that, at least, Jonah, and Hosea, and Nahum, were Galilæans, and they ignored the fact that if the followers of Jesus were mostly from the illiterate north, He had also not a few even from the sons of bigoted Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER L.

### AFTER THE FEAST.



ALL who attended the Feast of Tabernacles were required to sleep in the city the first night at least, but were free afterwards to go any distance outside, within the limit of a Sabbath day's journey. Jesus, accustomed to the pure air of the hills and open country, and with little sympathy for the noise and merriment, or for the crowds and confusion, of the great holiday, was glad to avail Himself of this freedom, and went out, each night, after leaving the Temple, to seek sleep in the house of some friend on the Mount of Olives;[1] perhaps to that of the family of Bethany, of which we hear so much soon after this. The early morning, however, saw Him always at His post in the Temple courts; now in the royal porch; now in the court of the women, through which the men passed to their own.

[1] John 8. 1—11.

The vast concourse of people from all countries, and the general excitement and relaxation of the season, had gradually led to abuses. Pilgrimages, in all ages, have had an indifferent name for their influence on morals, and the yearly feasts at Jerusalem were likely no exception.

A large number of people had already gathered round Jesus, when a commotion was seen in the women's court, where He had sat down to teach. A woman of the humbler class had been guilty of immorality, and the Scribes, on the moment, saw in her sin a possible snare for the hated Galilæan. It was not their business, but that of her husband, to accuse her; nor could she be legally punished, except by divorce, if he, himself, were not a man of pure life. It was the custom, however, in cases of difficulty, to consult a famous Rabbi, and advantage was taken of this, to

entrap Jesus, if possible, by asking Him to adjudicate on the case. If He condemned her, and insisted that she should be stoned to death,[2] it would injure Him in the eyes of the people, for the Law, in this particular, had long been obsolete, from the very commonness of the offence. If, on the other hand, He simply dismissed her, they could charge Him with slighting the Law, for it was still formally binding. To condemn her to death, would, moreover, bring Him under the Roman law, as an invasion of the right of the governor.

[2] Lev. 20. 10. Deut 22. 24.

Leading forward their trembling prisoner—unveiled, and exposed before the crowd of men—the bitterest degradation to an Eastern woman—they set her before Jesus, and asked with feigned humility—

"Teacher, this woman has been guilty of sin. Now Moses, in the Law, charged us that such should be stoned. What is your opinion?"

Knowing their smooth dissimulation, He instinctively felt that this mock respect was a mere cloak for sinister designs. Yet the incident threw Him into a moment's confusion. His soul shrank from the spectacle thus brought before Him, and in His stainless purity He could not bear to look on the fallen one. Stooping down, therefore, at once to hide the blush He could not prevent, and to show that He would have nothing to do with such a matter, He began to write on the dust before Him—most likely the very words He was presently to utter. Had they chosen to read them, they might have spared themselves the open exposure that followed. But they were too occupied with their plot to read the warning, and again and again repeated the question, to force Him to answer. At last, raising His face for a moment and looking straight at them, He said—

"Let him, among you, who is free from sin of a like kind, cast the first stone at her, as is required of the chief witness, by Moses."[3]

[3] Deut. 13. 9, 10; 17. 7. Acts 7. 58

It was an age of deep immorality, and the words of Jesus went to their consciences. He had again stooped and begun to write, as soon as He had spoken, perhaps to remind them how sin, when followed by penitence, is effaced for ever, like characters written in dust. Meanwhile, their own bosoms

CHAP. L.

became their judges. One after another, beginning at the oldest among them, moved off, to the very last, and Jesus was left alone, with the woman, in the midst of the crowd.

Rising once more, and finding only the woman left, He asked her—

"Woman, where are thine accusers? Did no one condemn thee, by casting a stone at thee?"

"No one, Lord."

"Neither," said He, "shall I. I come not to condemn, but to save. I am no criminal judge, either to sentence or acquit. Go, repent of thy guilt, and sin no more."[4]

Paulus i. 410. Sepp, v. 176. Lightfoot, iii. 328. Rosenmüller, Lücke, Tholuck, Luthardt, *in loc.* Ewald, v. 480. Bibel Lex. ii. 63.

His enemies had often murmured at the pity and favour He had shown to the fallen and outcast. They knew how He had let one sinful woman wash His feet with her tears, and wipe them with her loose hair; how He had eaten with publicans and sinners, and how He even had a publican among His disciples. They had hoped to use all this against Him, but, once more, their schemes had only turned to their own shame. He had given no opinion for the obsolete law, or against it: their own consciences had set the offender free.[a]

This incident past, He began His discourse again to those round Him. He still sat in the court of the women, or, as it was sometimes called, "the treasury," from the thirteen brazen chests for offerings, with their trumpet-like mouths, opening through the wall of its buildings.[5] The court was the great thoroughfare to that of the Israelites, which was reached from it by the fifteen steps leading to the great gate.

Godwyn, 66

In the address of the day before, He had spoken of Himself as alone having the water of life for the thirst of the soul. "To give water to drink," was a common phrase for teaching and explaining the Law, and hence its meaning, when used by our Lord, was familiar to all His hearers.[6] Water, in such a climate, was the first necessary of life, and flowing, or living, waters pictured, at once, every image of joy and prosperity. But the mighty light, filling the heavens—the first-born creation of God—lifts the thoughts from individual benefit to that of the whole race, for light is

[6] Nork, 168.

the condition and source of all else, alike to nature and man. It was the characteristic of Jesus to make everything round Him, in creation or common life, His texts and illustrations. The shouts of the multitude, as they brought up the golden vessel of water from Siloam, had introduced the discourse on the living waters. Round the court in which He now sat, rose the great candelabra, in whose huge cups the illuminations of the feasts were kindled, that banished night from the city, and in whose brightness the multitudes found darkness changed to day, and these He now used as a text.

Pointing to them, and, from them, to the glorious sun, just risen over the Mount of Olives, and shining with dazzling splendour on the white houses of the city and the marble and gold of the Temple walls and gates, He began a new discourse, in language, which, from the lips of a Jew, was a direct claim to be the Messiah.[b]

"I am The Light of the World," said He—"that is, of the whole race of man!" Such words from One who was humility itself—One acknowledged by all to have unbounded supernatural power at His command, yet so self-restrained that He never used it for His own advantage, and was so unassuming and lowly that even the weakest and poorest felt perfectly free to approach Him—were uttered with a calm dignity which vouched their truth. "In me dwells divine truth," He continued, "and from me it shines forth, like the light, to all mankind. He who becomes my true disciple, and follows me sincerely, will no longer walk in the darkness of ignorance and sin, which is the death of the soul, but in the light of everlasting life, given to the children of the Messiah's kingdom."

Some partisans of the Rabbinical party, who remained to watch Him, listened with eager attention to every word. Enraged at the failure of the last attempt to entrap Him, what they had now heard, which was far beyond what any prophet had ever claimed for himself, deepened their bitterness.

"You make yourself judge in your own favour," said they. "You require us to believe you, on your own word. It is too much to ask. A man's witness on his own behalf is worthless."

"I do not make myself witness in my own favour, replied Jesus. "Your rule does not apply to me, for I speak not for myself alone, but as the mouthpiece of Him from whom I came, and to whom I shall soon return. If you knew who He was, you would be forced to receive His testimony to me. But you do not know Him, and therefore you reject it, for you know neither whence I came nor whither I shall return. I know, and must know, best, whose messenger I am, and what commission He has given me. You have no right to accuse me as a deceiver, for you are not in a position to judge of me, since you know nothing of my mission. You look at me with jaundiced eyes, and judge only by my lowly, outward appearance, and are thus misled. I, by myself, judge neither in my own favour, nor against any one, for I have come not to condemn, but to save. If, indeed, in any case, I seem to judge, as in this instance respecting my commission, it is not I, alone, who do so, but I and my Father who has sent me judge together, and thus the judgment must be true. I am not alone; the Father who sent me is with me, and thus, even by your own Law,[7] by which the testimony of two *men* is received as true, that which I offer for myself is more than sufficient, for I offer you my own word, and no one can convict me of untruthfulness, and also the witness of My Father. He witnesses for me by the very truths I utter, and by the miracles you admit I perform."

[7] Deut. 17. 6

"Where is, then, this second witness, Thy Father?" retorted His adversaries. "We do not see Him. He must be here, if, as you say, He is a witness for you?" He had too often spoken of God as His Father to permit of any mistake as to His meaning, but they affected to misunderstand Him. With perfect calmness, Jesus replied, "You ask who is my Father, and do not know me, myself. I cannot answer you till you have juster conceptions of me. If you looked at me, my teaching, and my deeds, in a right light, you would know who my Father is, for He reveals Himself in me. But your hearts are now so prejudiced, that you would not understand what I might tell you, either of myself or of Him, were I to attempt it."

These were bold words in such a place; the very stronghold of His enemies; but as He finished and rose to depart, no one laid hands on Him. His hour was not yet come.

A fragment of another discourse delivered like this in the Temple, on one of the following days, has been preserved.[8] The immediate circumstances preceding are not recorded, but there must have been another dispute with His enemies. A fresh attempt to win them, followed; with solemn warnings of the results of their finally rejecting Him.

[8] John 8. 21.

"The time approaches," said He, in effect, "when I shall leave you, and when I am gone you will seek me, that is, you will cry out for the Messiah, but in vain, and will look for Him without success; you will fain be delivered from the calamities that will come on you; but you will die, unpardoned and unsanctified, with your sins on your souls,—die here, and die for ever; for your seeking me, that is, the Messiah, will not be from faith and repentance, but only a despairing cry for deliverance from temporal distress. You cannot hope to be able to go up to heaven, to find and bring me down as your Saviour. I shall be gone from you for ever."

"Will He kill Himself?" asked one of the bitterest among the bystanders, with blasphemous irony. "In that case, certainly, we shall not be able to follow Him, or willing either, to where *He* will go!"

Taking no notice of the coarse insulting jest, Jesus went on to point out, calmly, and with surpassing dignity, that they spake as they did only because they could not comprehend Him or His sayings, coming as He did from above. "You spring from the earth, I from heaven; your natures and hearts, in keeping with your origin, are without the higher wisdom and divine life of those who are born of God. You have the thoughts and ideas of this age: I speak those of the New Kingdom of God. It was on this ground I said to you, that you would die in your sins, for only faith in me, as the Messiah, can raise those who are not born from above, gross fleshly souls, born only of the flesh, to higher divine life, in time and eternity. If you do not believe that I am He, you shall certainly die in your sins."

"I am He," was the sum of Jehovah's self-proclamation in the Old Testament, and it was now repeated, in its lofty majesty, by Jesus, of His own Messianic dignity. He could assume that the question of the Messiah was the ever-present and supreme thought of all His hearers. The one point was whether He, or another yet to come, were the Expected One.

The Rabbinists perfectly understood Him, but would not acknowledge that they did so, and asked Him contemptuously, "Who art Thou, then?"

"I am what I have said from the beginning of my ministry I was,—how can you still ask? I have much to say respecting you, much especially to blame; but I refrain, and confine myself to my immediate mission,—to proclaim to mankind what I have received from Him who sent me." Strange as it might seem, though He had used similar terms so often that the allusion to God was generally recognized at once, His hearers did not in this instance understand Him.

Seeing their hesitation, He continued,—"Had you acknowledged me as the Messiah, you would have understood what I have said of my Father. But when you have crucified me, you will know that I am He, and that I never act alone, but speak only what I have heard from my Father, before I came into the world. My glory, which will be revealed after I die, will force you to realize this." He referred to the future descent of the Holy Spirit after His resurrection,—the miracles of the Apostles, the spread of His Kingdom, the judgment of God on the nation, and His final return in the clouds of heaven at the last day. "My Father who sent me," He continued, "has not left me alone, though you do not see Him, but have before you only a lowly man, in the midst of enemies; He is ever with me, for I do always the things that please Him."

These lofty words must have been wondrously borne out by His whole air, and by the calm truth and heavenliness of His tone and looks; for, instead of revolting His hearers by the contradiction between claims so awful and Him who made them, which we instinctively feel there must have been, had they been uttered by a sinful man like ourselves,

they won many to believe in Him, there and then, as the Messiah.

It is impossible not to feel that such words were a distinct claim of absolute sinlessness, on which no mere man could for a moment venture. Yet in His mouth they seemed only the fitting expression of evident truth. Nor is it possible to exaggerate their importance. When we remember how entirely His whole life was devoted to the enforcement of the purest morals even in the domain of thought and conscience, they acquire a significance that awes the mind. Such an absolute purity implied the keenest discrimination between good and evil, holiness and sin. "To please God," was with Him no empty phrase, but implied a divine holiness in the very fountains of being; pure as the light of a morning without clouds. Yet His language respecting Himself was always the same. The greatest saints are most ready to bewail their unworthiness, but He never for a moment humbles Himself before God for sin; never asks pardon for it; and not only makes no approach to expressing a sense of needing repentance and forgiveness, but calmly takes on Himself the divine prerogative of forgiving the sins of men. The Ideal of humility, and truth, and holy life, He must have known His own spiritual state with exact fidelity, for the passing of even an unworthy thought over such a soul, would have instantly clouded its peace and joy. Yet, with this perfect self-knowledge, He could calmly claim that His Father saw in Him only His own image of perfect holiness, which alone can please Him.[9]

The overpowering impression produced on His hearers, was, however, too sudden and superficial for permanence.

Resuming His discourse, therefore, He continued,—addressing those who, for the moment, in spite of themselves, believed on Him,—"If your present professions be deep and lasting, and you continue permanently in the same mind; acknowledging me as the Messiah, and carrying out my teaching in your hearts and lives, you will be my disciples indeed. You will then, by experience, know the power and worth of the divine truths of my Person and teaching, for my words are the truth, and the truth will make you free."[10 c]

[9] Ul'mann, 73, 166.

[10] Bibel Lex. ii. 296. Melvill's Sermons, i. 148. Newman's Plain Sermons, ii. 44. Robertson's Sermons, 1,2.65.

CHAP. L.

He spoke, of course, of spiritual freedom: of emancipation from a sinful life by the elevating and purifying influence of their new faith; but, like Nicodemus with the new birth, or the Samaritan woman with the living water, or the Twelve with the leaven of the Pharisees, they understood the word only of political liberty, and in a moment showed how little they understood their new Master's spirit. Their fierce Jewish pride was instantly in a blaze.

"Free! what do you mean?" said they. "We are the descendants of Abraham; the race to whom God gave the promise of being the first of nations—His chosen people. We have never been in bondage to any. What do you mean?" They conveniently forgot the episodes of Egypt and Babylon, and thought of the shadow of political liberty they enjoyed under the prudent Romans,[11] by the retention of their own laws, as in the protected States of India under Britain. It was an offence punishable with excommunication for one Jew to call another a slave,[12] and part of their morning prayer, even when under a foreign yoke, ran thus—"Blessed be the Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has made me a free man."

[11] Bell. Jud. vi. 6. 2.

[12] Eisenmenger, i. 576.

But Jesus answered—"With all earnestness, let me tell you that every one who commits sin is under the power of sin—a slave under that of his master. I speak of spiritual liberty, not of political. You have need of the help I can and will give you, if you desire to free yourselves from this moral slavery—the bondage to your own sinful inclinations and habits. You are slaves in the great household of God, not sons, and the slave has no claim to remain always in the household: it is in the power of his lord to sell him to another, or to put him out, when he pleases. All men, whether Jews or others, are sinners, and as such, slaves of their sin, and must be made free, before they can claim, as you do, to belong of right to the household of God. He will not treat the slaves of sin as His sons, but will turn them out of His kingdom as a lord drives out an unworthy slave. But I, the Son of God, abide in God's household, as His Son, for ever, and, hence, if, by the truth I proclaim, and the grace I secure you, I free you from slavery to sin,

you will be really free; not outwardly only, and in name, as now. Were I not to be always, as His Son, in the Household of God, my Father—you might doubt my power, or fear because of my absence; but my presence there for ever gives you perfect security that the freedom I offer will be real and abiding. I know that you are descended from Abraham, but it is only in a bodily sense. If you were his spiritual sons, you would believe in me; but, now, in spite of your passing belief, I see that you have turned against me already, and gone back to those who would kill me. Need I say that you act thus only because my teaching had no real hold on your hearts? I have told you what I have seen when I was still with my Father; but you act according to the teaching of *your* father."

"Our father," interrupted some, "is Abraham,"—for they saw that He meant something else. "If ye were in the true sense," replied Jesus—"not in mere outward descent—the sons of Abraham, you would imitate Abraham; to do so is the only descent from him of worth before God. But you seek to kill me—a man who has spoken to you the truth, which I have received from God for your good: because it humbles your pride and self-righteousness. Abraham would never have acted thus. He received and rejoiced in the truth as revealed to him, though it was far less clear than my words have made it to you. The fact is, I repeat, with unutterable sadness, you act as your father teaches you."

"What do you mean?" cried out a number at a time "You say that Abraham is not our father—who is our father, then?" Do you mean that Sarah, our mother, was unfaithful to Abraham, and that he was only in name our father, not in fact? We have only *one* father, not *two*, as they have who are born from adultery, and if you deny it is *Abraham*, it must be *God*."

"If God were your father, you would love ME," quietly replied Jesus, "for I am the Very Son of God, proceeding, in my Being, from Him, and descending from heaven to mankind. I have not come from any personal and private act of my own, but as the Messiah sent forth by the Father. You cannot understand what I say, because your hearts

are so gross that you have no ears for my teaching: it is dark to you because you are morally blind. So far from being the spiritual children of Abraham, far less of God, you are children of the devil; and, true to your nature, ye copy your father. From the beginning of the human race he was a murderer, and put away the truth from him, because there is no truth in him. The devil is a liar by nature, and lives in lies, and knows nothing, in his heart, of truth, and his children are liars like their father—that is, they thrust away the truth from them, as you are doing now.

"Because I speak the truth, and do not seek, like Satan, to win you to evil, by flattering your self-deception and sins, you do not believe me. Yet, would I deceive you? Who of you can convict me of sin? But if I be sinless, I can have no untruthfulness—no lie—in me, and, therefore, what I speak must be truth and truth only. Hence I am right in saying you cannot be the children of God, for he that is of God hears God's words—that is, hears me, for I speak the words of God. That you are not really the children of God, though you call yourselves such, explains why you do not believe in me."[13]

[13] Ullmann, 166.

"That proves what we said of you," interrupted some of the crowd. "Such language about your own nation shows that we were right in saying that you were a Samaritan[d]—an enemy of the true people of God, and possessed with a devil."

"I have not a devil," replied Jesus; "I honour my Father by these very words, for they tend to the glory of God. As He has taught me, so I teach you, when I say that the wicked are servants and children of the devil. Yet, though I speak not from my own authority, but that of God, you do me, His messenger, the great dishonour of saying I have a devil. But I shall not attempt to refute the slander, for I care nothing for either your approval or praise. There is One here—my Father—who cares for my honour, and will judge those who contemn me. Would that none of you expose yourselves to His wrath! May you rather receive from Him life

eternal! Once more, let me repeat, He that believes in me, and obeys my words, shall never taste death."

As usual, the hearers put a material sense on these words, and understood them of natural death; taking it as a proof of their assertion that He had a devil—that He could promise any one that he should never die. "Even Abraham died," they continued, "and so did the prophets. Whom do you make yourself? You put yourself above all men, even the greatest. Abraham could not ward off death, nor could the prophets. Do you claim to be greater than they?"

"If I, for mere desire of glory," replied Jesus, "were to boast of being greater than Abraham, such glory would be idle. If what I have said tends to exalt me, it is not I who honour myself, but my Father, by whose authority I act and speak that honours me—My Father, of whom you say He is your God. If you fail to see how He constantly does so, it is because, in spite of your calling yourselves His people, you have not known Him. But I know Him, as only His Son can. If I were to say that I did not know Him, and speak His Words, I should be like yourselves, untruthful; but I both know Him, and keep all His commands, for my whole life is obedience to Him.

"But that you may know that I really am greater than even Abraham—the Friend of God—let me tell you that Abraham, when he received, with such joy, the promise that the Messiah should come from his race, and bless all nations, was rejoicing that He would, hereafter, from Heaven, see my day, and He *has* seen my appearing, from His abode in Paradise, and exulted at it."

The crowd, gross as usual, understood these words of Abraham's earthly life, and fancied that Jesus was now claiming to have been alive so long ago as the time of Abraham, and to have known him.

"It is two thousand years ago since Abraham's day," broke in a voice, "and you are not fifty years old yet; do you mean to say you have seen Abraham?"

"I mean to say," replied Jesus, "far more than even that. Let me tell you, with the utmost solemnity,—before Abraham was born, I AM."

CHAP. L.

[14] Exod. 3. 14.

[15] Lücke and Meyer *in loc.* Winer, 250. Ullmann, 179.

[16] Ant. xvii. 9. 3.

This was the very phrase in which Jehovah had announced Himself to Israel in Egypt.[14] It implied a continuous existence from the beginning,[15] as if the speaker had claimed to be, Himself, the Uncreated Eternal. Abraham had come into being, but HE had existence in Himself, without a beginning.

His hearers instantly took it in this august meaning, and Jesus, the Truth, made no attempt, then or afterwards, to undeceive them. Utterly turned against Him, they rushed hither and thither, in wild fanaticism, for stones, with which to put Him to death as a blasphemer. Many of those used in the building of parts of the Temple, still incomplete, lay in piles at different parts.[16] But Jesus hid Himself among the crowd, some of whom were less hostile, and, in the confusion, passed out of the sacred precincts, to safety.

# CHAPTER LI.

## THE LAST MONTH OF THE YEAR.



PRUDENCE demanded that Jesus should for a time withdraw from Jerusalem after the outbreak of murderous fanaticism in the Temple courts, and He would be the more inclined to this because Judea had, as yet, had so small a share in His ministry. The unmeasured religious pride which had resisted any impression in His first lengthened visit, might possibly yield, in some cases, after the incidents of His work in Galilee and Jerusalem, and doubtless did so; perhaps, in more instances than we suspect. But whatever the success, He could not leave the special home-land of Israel without one more attempt to win it to the New Kingdom of God. Hence the next months, till after the Feast of Dedication, in December, were spent either in Jerusalem or Judea.

In these last weeks of His life Jesus found a home, from time to time, in the bosom of a village family in Bethany, on the east side of the Mount of Olives. When He first came to know them is not told: perhaps they were among the few fruits of His former sojourn in Judea; possibly the family of him who is known in the Gospels as Simon the Leper;[1] one of the converts of the early Judean labours, in gratitude for his miraculous cure. Bethany is easily reached from Jerusalem. The flight of steps on the east side of the Temple, before the Golden Gate, led to the quiet valley of the Kedron. A bridge over the sometimes dry channel of the stream opened into a camel path, rising, past Gethsemane, in a slow and gentle ascent over the brow of the hill which lies between the Mount of Olives and that which Pompey had defiled by his camp; called, from this, the

[1] Mark 14. 3. Matt. 26. 2. John 12. 1.

Hill of Offence. To save distance, however, a footway ran from Gethsemane over the top of Olivet, and this, travellers a-foot, like Jesus, for the most part preferred to the other easier but more circuitous road. Descending the eastern slope, a few steps led from the bare hill-side, with its scattered, prickly shrubs, to a sweet dell, rich in fig, almond, and olive trees, through which wound a road, here and there cut out in the side of the hill. Ascending the east end of the dell, Bethany lay close in sight, only three-quarters of an hour's distance from Jerusalem, but hidden from it by a spur of the Mount of Olives. The ruins of a tower rise, now, over the highest point of the village, but they are of later date than the days of our Lord. The houses, whitewashed and flat-roofed, lie hidden among the surrounding heights, amidst green fields and trees of many kinds; all the more charming, as the eastern side of Mount Olivet, the background to the picture, is much more barren and dreary than the western.

In this sequestered spot, on the edge of the great wilderness of Judea, Jesus found a delightful retreat in the vine-covered cottage of Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus. Loving and beloved, it always offered a peaceful retirement from the confusion and danger of the Temple courts, or the still more exhausting circuits of His wider southern journeys. It was the one spot, so far as we know, that He could call home in these last months, but it was apparently the sweetest, and most like home, He had ever had.

The household consisted of two sisters, and a brother—Martha, Mary, and Lazarus—names which mark the transition-character of the times; for, while "Martha" was the unchanged native equivalent of "lady," "Mary" and "Lazarus" were Greek forms of the old Hebrew "Miriam" and "Eleazer." May we trace, in this superiority to narrow conservatism, a liberality in their parents, which led both them and their children to receive the Galilæan teacher so readily and so fondly? They had evidently been disciples before this last stay in Judea; likely from the time of their now dead father, who had, doubtless, often talked over his doubts or reasons for loving trust, in their company.

Martha appears to have been the head of the little household, and may have been, as many have believed, a widow.[2] The family seems to have had a good social position, and to have been above the average in circumstances.[3] The character of the two sisters shows itself vividly in the first notice.[4] Martha shares the piety of her sister, but fails, at first, to rise to such a high conception of the nature and dignity of their wondrous Friend as her sister, and is busied with the practical cares of life to an extent that seems to Him excessive. Amiably anxious for the comfort of her guest, she is absorbed in every detail of hospitality which she thinks likely to please Him, while Mary sits at His feet, to listen to His words and watch His every look. The busy, motherly Martha, seeing Mary thus seemingly idle, feels a passing jealousy and annoyance, unworthy of her calmer self—for a word to her sister would doubtless have been enough—and comes impatiently with a complaint to Jesus, not free from irreverence. "Lord," says she, "do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work alone? If *you* speak to her, she will help me." As if to imply that she would pay no attention to Martha's words.

[2] Ewald thinks that Mary was the elder. Geschichte v. 481.

[3] John 11. 38. Matt. 26. 7 John 12. 2, 3 John 11. 33.

[4] Luke 10. 38—42.

The gentle calmness of Jesus, too grateful to both for their loving tenderness to overlook the good in each, had only the tenderest reply. "Martha, Martha," said He. "my wants are easily satisfied, and it is, besides, better, like Mary, to choose the one thing needful above all—supreme concern for the things of God—for they alone can never be taken from us." Of Lazarus, before his death, we only know that his spirit and temper were such that Jesus made him, in an especial manner, His friend.[a]

An incident of this period is preserved by St. Luke. In one of our Lord's journeys in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, a Rabbi,[5] skilled in the Mosaic Law; and, as such, a public teacher and interpreter of the Rabbinical rules, rising from his seat among his students, as Jesus passed, resolved to show his wisdom at the expense of the hated Galilæan; and trap Him, if possible, into some doubtful utterance. "Teacher," asked he, "what shall I do to inherit eternal life? We know what the Rabbis enjoin, but what sayest Thou?"

[5] Luke 10. 25—37.

CHAP. LI.

"What is written in the Law?" replied Jesus, "how readest thou? For the law of God alone can determine such a matter."

Quoting a passage which every Jew repeated in each morning and evening's prayer, and wore in the little text-boxes of his phylactery, he answered glibly, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind," and added, in a Jewish sense, "and thy neighbour as thyself."[6]

[6] Deut. 6. 5. Lev 19. 18.

"You are quite right," said Jesus. "Do this, and you shall live."

The answer hardly left room for anything further; but the questioner would not be balked of an opportunity of showing his acuteness, and, perhaps, of drawing Jesus into a difficulty. No command was so plain as not to furnish subjects for dispute to hair-splitting theologians of his class; and, in this case, there had been endless wrangling in the Rabbinical schools on the definition of the word "neighbour." Jesus, moreover, as was well known, held very broad views on the subject; views utterly heterodox in the eyes of the schools. Determined not to let conversation drop, the questioner, therefore, opened it afresh.

"But you have not told me," said he, "who is my neighbour. Pray do so, else I may fail in my duty."

Instead of answering him directly, Jesus replied, in the fashion of the Rabbis themselves, by a parable, which I amplify, for its clearer understanding.

"A certain man," said He, "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. You know the way, so steep, wild, and dangerous: well called the Bloody Road, for who can tell how many robberies and murders have happened on it in these unsettled times, when the country is full of men driven from their homes by oppression and misery?[7] As he went on, a band of robbers from the wild gorges through which the road sinks, rushed out upon him; stripped him, for he was a poor man, with only his clothes to take from him; beat him when he resisted; and then made off, leaving him half dead.

[7] Bell. Jud. iv. 8. 3. Hieron. ad Jer. 3. 2.

"As he lay, bleeding, insensible, and naked, on the rough

stones, a priest, who lived at Jericho, like so many more, and had finished his course at the Temple, went past. He was busy reading the copy of the Law, which all priests carry with them; but as he came near and saw the wounded and seemingly dying man, he hastily crossed over, and passed, on the other side of the road, afraid of defiling himself by blood, or by the touch of one perhaps unclean.

"Soon after, a Levite, also from the Temple, came by, and he, when he saw the injured man, stepped over to him, and stood for a time looking at him,[8] but presently crossed the road again, as if he had been polluted, and went on in all haste, lest the like should happen to himself.

"But a Samaritan, travelling that way, came where the poor man lay, and, when he saw him, was moved with compassion at his misery; and went to him, and, lighting from his ass, bound up his wounds, after pouring oil mixed with wine[9] on them, to assuage the pain, and soften the injured parts; and set him on his own beast, never thinking who he might be that he was helping; whether Jew, heathen, or fellow-countryman; or of his own danger in such a spot; and brought him to the khan, which, you know, stands at the road-side, amidst the bare walls of rocks, three hours from Jerusalem.[10] There he had every care taken of him, and stayed with him, tending him through the night. His own business forced him to leave him next day; but before doing so, he went to the keeper of the khan, and gave him two denarii,[11] telling him to take care of him, and adding, that if more were needed, he would give it when he came back.

"Which of these three, do you think, was neighbour to him that fell among the robbers?"

The Rabbi, true to his national hatred, would not utter the hated word, "the Samaritan." "He that had mercy on him, no doubt," said he.

"Go and do thou in like manner," replied Jesus, and left him; if humbled and mortified, it is to be hoped, a wiser and better man.

A fragment of the familiar instructions of these months, by which Jesus daily trained His disciples, is preserved to us by St. Luke.[12] He had, at an earlier period, given the Twelve

[8] See a fine Sermon of Sterne's; Sermons, i. 57.

[9] Isaiah 1 6.

[10] Furrer, 148.

[11] Equal, in purchasing value, to from six to seven of our shillings. Dr. S. Davidson's New Test., Table.

[12] Luke 11. 1—13.

CHAP. LI.

and His other hearers, a model of prayer in the Sermon on the Mount, but now, one, perhaps of the later disciples, asked for a form of prayer such as other Rabbis, and as John, gave their followers. With the gentle repetition we so often find in the Gospels, Jesus, forthwith, once more recited the model He had already given, and took advantage of the request, to enforce the value of prayer by similar assurances of answer from God as He had given before. In one detail, however, He varied His language, by adding a brief and pointed parable.

"You know," said He, "how it is with men. If any of you have a friend, and go to him in the middle of the night, and call through the door, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has just come to my house from a journey; the weather was so hot, he could not start till the cool of the day; this has made him so late; and I have nothing to set before him;' most likely he whom you thus disturb will say to you from within, 'Trouble me not; the door is locked for the night, and my children are with me in bed, and I cannot wake them. I cannot get up and give you what you ask.' Yet, if you refuse to leave and keep renewing your request, he will, in the end, rise and give you as many loaves as you need, yielding to your importunity, what he would not do for you as his friend.

"If, now, selfish *men* listen to those who thus will not take a denial, how much more surely will the God of love listen to humble and persistent prayer? Be sure, therefore, that they who, with earnest, believing, souls, seek the supply of spiritual wants for themselves, or others, will assuredly have their petitions heard."

While He was still in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, the Seventy, having fulfilled their mission, made their way back to Him.[13] Like the Twelve, they returned in great joy at their success, and reported that even the devils had been subject to them, through their Master's name, though they had received no special power over them, such as He had given to the Twelve. It was a moment of calm triumph to Jesus, as the sure anticipation of infinitely greater results hereafter. His spirit caught the contagion of their gladness

[13] Luke 10. 17—24.

and gloom and despondency were forgotten in the vision of the future triumph of the New Kingdom—His one all-absorbing thought. But there was a danger lest their very success might injure them. The consideration it had won them might tend to unworthy pride. It was needful to warn them, and moderate their self-confidence.

"You need not wonder," said He, "that Satan is not able to withstand you. Long ere now, I foresaw, in spirit, that he would fall like a lightning-flash from the height of his power, at my coming, and the putting forth of my might. He *has* fallen, now, to the earth, where his craft and designs can be seen and met. His sway is already broken by the new-begun Kingdom of God. It has struck him down, as it were, from the sky, with its secrecy and sudden surprises; and he is, now, as if seen, and easy to shun. I have broken his sceptre, and made it possible for you to do what you have done. Take heed, therefore, not to think too much of yourselves, as if the success were your own. I now give you far greater power than any you have yet enjoyed. You will, hereafter, tread all satanic powers—the serpents and scorpions of hell[14]—under your feet, as victors tread under foot their conquered foes, and nothing will be suffered to hinder your triumph as my servants. You need not, therefore, fear Satan.

[14] A Rabbinical phrase.

"Yet success over the enemy of souls is not that in which you should rejoice most. It may raise pride, and make you too secure. Rather rejoice that your names, as my disciples, are in the roll of citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is an infinitely greater honour than any outward respect these wonders could bring you."[15]

[15] Ewald, v. 436. Hess, ii. 216. John 9. 1.–41.

The murderous outburst, from which Jesus had fled, was now a thing of the past, so that He could once more venture into Jerusalem, and even into the Temple. The spacious porches were a favourite haunt of the afflicted poor, and among these, of a poor man, blind from his birth. Surrounded and followed, as usual, by a number of disciples, Jesus was, one day, passing, when this man attracted His notice. It is not said that He spoke to him, but the mere fact of His paying any heed to him, suggested a question to

CHAP. LI.

some of those round Him. "Rabbi," they asked, "we have been taught that children are born lame, crooked, maimed, blind, or otherwise defective—for some sin of their parents, or for some sin committed by themselves before birth. Who sinned, in this case—this man or his parents—that he was born blind?"

That there was a strict system of rewards and punishments during the present life, according to the merits or sins of individuals, had been the original doctrine of Jewish theology. It had gradually, however, been modified, though still held by the multitude; and it was superseded in the New Kingdom by the transfer of final retribution to the future world. The Rabbinical theology, sedulously taught in every synagogue, sought to reconcile the contradiction between the hereditary belief and the facts of life, by laboured and unsatisfactory theories. The words were put into the mouth of God Himself, in one of the current apologues so much in vogue, that "the good man, if prosperous, was so, as the son of a righteous man; while the unfortunate good man suffered as the son of a sinful parent. So, also, the wicked man might be prosperous, if the son of a godly parent; but if unfortunate, it showed that his parents had been sinners."[16] It was further believed that a child might sin before its birth, though it is a question whether there was any general idea of the transmigration of souls, to account for suffering as the punishment of sin in some earlier existence.[17]

[16] Berachot. Bab. 7 a

[17] Lightfoot, iii. 338.

"The affliction of this man," replied Jesus, "has been caused neither by his own sin, nor by that of his parents; but his being born blind offers an opportunity for the display of the divine power and goodness in his person. It is on such sufferers as he that I must show the mighty works which God has given me, as the Messiah, to do. In His service I must work unweariedly, as He, my Father, Himself works. Like Him with His work, I cannot intermit mine even on this day, though it be a Sabbath. I am like one who cannot leave his task till the night comes, when no one can work. The night is coming erelong to me, when I shall cease from all such labours, as the workman does at the

close of day. As long as I am in the world, I must be the light of men: when I depart, the light will be withdrawn."

He might have opened the eyes of the poor man by a word, but a great lesson was to be taught His enemies. He wished to protest once more against the hypocritical strictness of the Rabbinical observance of Sabbath, which so entirely destroyed the true significance of the holy day. He would show that it was in full accordance with the office of the Messiah, not only Himself, to do what the dominant party denounced as WORK, on the Sabbath, but to require it also from him whom He cured.

It was the belief, in antiquity, that the saliva of one who was fasting was of benefit to weak eyes, and that clay relieved those who suffered from tumours on the eyelids. It may be that Jesus thought of this: at any rate, stooping to the ground, and mixing saliva with some of the dust, He touched the eyes of the blind man with it, and then sent him to wash it off, in the pool of Siloam. It was impossible that the clay or the water could restore the eyesight; but Jesus had once more asserted His right to do works of mercy on the Sabbath; in opposition to the narrow pretences of the Pharisees; and the faith of the man himself was put to the test. He, forthwith, did as commanded, and his sight was at once made perfect.

Full of childish delight at the possession of the new amazing sense, the man must have attracted attention, even where the change wrought in his appearance prevented his being recognized. He was well known in the city as a beggar, blind from his birth. Presently, some asked, doubting their senses, "if this were not he who sat every day begging?" "It *is* he," said one. "It is some one *like* him," said others. "I *am* he," said the man. "How did you get your sight, then?" asked a number at once. The man told them. "Where is this Jesus?" they asked again; but he could not tell.

It was clear that another great miracle had been performed by the Teacher whom the authorities denounced; and, hence, from whatever motive, the man was taken before them. The sight of him might change their feelings towards Jesus, for

CHAP. LI

even they did not pretend to deny the supernatural power of their hated opponent, though they tried to attribute it to the help of the Prince of devils.

Brought before the dignitaries of the Law and Temple, the man had to repeat the story of his cure. The miracle could not be denied; but the character of Jesus might, at least, be discredited, for it appeared that He had dared to break the Sabbath both in act and word. "This man is not of God," said some of the Council, "for does not the Law expressly forbid the anointing of the eyes with saliva on the Sabbath, as *work?*[18] And, besides, no healing is permitted on the Sabbath except when life is in danger."[19]

[19] Maimon. Schabb. 21. Buxtorf, Syn. Jud. c. 16.

[20] Schoettg. ad Matt. 12. 9.

"How could a man that does wrong, work such miracles?" replied some of the more liberal-minded. God would never give such power to such a person. There is something special that needs looking into, in this case of what you call Sabbath-breaking—before you decide so confidently."

They were hopelessly divided, and at last, like Orientals, resolved to get the opinion of the man himself. They asked him, therefore, what he thought of Him who had cured him. "I think Him a prophet," answered the sturdy confessor. But it would never do to admit this, for even the Rabbis owned that a prophet might dispense with the laws of the Sabbath.

The hostile party in the Council were in a strait, and would fain deny the fact of the miracle altogether. They would, at least, require more evidence than the man's own word. Sending the officers for his parents, therefore, they had them brought before them, and asked them:—

"Is this your son, who, as you say, was born blind? How comes he to see, if that were so?" But the question brought no relief, for the parents shrewdly refused to commit themselves beyond the bare acknowledgment that he was their son, and that he had been born blind. "He is of age—ask himself," added they. Nor was their caution unjustified, for they had heard that if any one acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah he would be "put out of the synagogue;" a punishment involving the direst consequences socially and religiously. It was, in fact, the lesser excommunication,

which lasted thirty days, but might be lengthened for continued impenitence, or curtailed by contrition. It shut a person utterly from the synagogue, for even if he entered it, he was reckoned as not present; no mourning for the dead, and no rite of circumcision, could take place in his house; and no one but his wife or child could come within four cubits of him.[20]

[20] Bibel Lex. *Art.* "Bann"

The discomfited Council could only fall back on the man himself. "He must," they told him, "take care of himself, else they would have to deal with him. He had better tell the whole truth, and confess what he knew about this Jesus, and thus show that he feared God, by giving Him the glory; for we know very well," said they, "that this man is a sinner." But he was neither to be brow-beaten nor dragooned, and would not yield an inch to either threats or persuasions. "It is a very strange thing," said he, "that you talk about Him so. I can say nothing about His being a sinner; I only know that whereas I was blind, now I see."

Foiled once more, they fell back on their first question. "What is it, you say, He did to you? How was it He opened your eyes?" But they had to do with one of sterner and manlier stuff than most. "I told you all that already," replied he, "and you did not listen; why do you wish to hear it again? Are you, also, like me, inclined to become His disciples?"

The court was not accustomed to be treated with so little deference and awe; their pride and dignity were sadly flustered, and they forgot both in their excitement. With the passionate heat of Orientals, they stooped to insult and wrangle with the humble creature at their bar. As they could get nothing against Jesus from him, they branded him as His disciple—"*You* are a disciple of this Galilæan: *we* are the disciples of Moses, the man of God: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we know not who has sent Him—it must have been Beelzebub, at best."

Unabashed, and true-hearted, the man was not to be put down by either priest or Rabbi. "Well, this is very strange," retorted he. "You say you don't know who has sent Him, and yet He has opened my eyes! A man who has

done that, must, as you know, have come from God, and be no sinner; for every one knows that God alone can give power to work such a miracle, and He does not hear sinners, but only those who worship Him truly, and do His will. So wonderful an instance of the power of God being granted to any man has never been heard of, as that which has been granted to this Jesus; for, from the beginning of the world, such a thing was never known, as the opening of the eyes of a man born blind, even by the greatest of the prophets. There is no such thing in any part of the Law or the Prophets. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."

"What!" screamed several voices at once. "You, a creature tainted in your very core with sin, before your birth, and born with its miserable punishment on you,—you, an out-and-out worthless wretch,—do you venture to teach us? You are excommunicated." And so they cast him out of the synagogue, there and then.

The report of this incident soon reached Jesus. The blind beggar was the first confessor in the New Kingdom, and its Lord lost no time in acknowledging and strengthening one who had owned Him fearlessly before the very Council itself. Seeking him out, and telling him He had heard of his grateful fidelity, He added—"You believe on the Son of God, do you not?" The name, as that of Jesus, Himself, had not reached him, but he knew it as one of the titles of the expected Messiah. "Who is He, Lord," asked he, instantly, "that I may believe on Him?" "Thou hast seen Him, even now," answered Jesus, "and it is He who talks with thee." It was enough. The healed one had before him the mysterious Being whose power towards himself had shown Him to be "the messenger sent of God,"—Him whom he had only now confessed. "Lord," said he, "I believe," and rendered Him, forthwith, the worship due to the Messiah—God's Anointed.[b]

Meanwhile, a crowd had gathered, as the beggar, now seeing not only with bodily but spiritual eyes, threw himself at His feet. It was a moment of deep emotion. Addressing Himself to those around, among whom, as usual,

were some of the ever-watchful Rabbis, Jesus seized the opportunity for a few more words of warning.

"I am come into the world," said He, "fan in hand, to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to bring a judgment-like division among men. The poor in spirit who feel their need of divine truth, and mourn their spiritual blindness, are enlightened by me, but those who think they see, and fancy they know the truth, are shown to be blind, and are shut out from my kingdom, to the blindness they have chosen."

"Are we blind, then?" asked some of the Rabbis in the crowd. He had classed them as those who fancied they alone saw, and their pride was roused by His venturing to speak of them, the teachers of the nation, as blind—language so opposed to the servility shown them as a rule.

"Blind?" replied Jesus—"it would be well if you were so, for, in that case, your disbelief in me would not be sinful. It would not show a wilful resistance to divine truth, but only that you had not yet attained the knowledge of it. But since you claim to see, it makes your unbelief criminal, and deepens your guilt, for it is your spiritual pride which leads you to reject me, and thus keeps you from believing, and so receiving pardon."

In the East, as in lonely mountainous districts of our own country, the relation of a shepherd to his flock is very different from the mechanical and indifferent one of some other parts. The loneliness of shepherd life in these countries throws man and the creatures he tends so much together—binds them so to each other by a sense of companionship, of dangers shared, and pleasures mutually enjoyed—that the Eastern shepherd, like the shepherd of our own mountains, forgets the distance between himself and his flock, and becomes their friend. Nor is the sense of dependence only on his side. The sheep are drawn to their shepherd as much as he to them. They are all to each other. They share in common the silence and lonely magnificence of the mountains, or the desert. We learn to love that for which we brave peril; and the dangers of torrents, of robbers, of wolves, of thirst, or of straying endear the

CHAP. LI.

flock for which they are borne, to the Oriental; as the dangers of winter storms, or mountain mists, and the thousand incidents of pastoral life in wild districts, do with our Highland shepherds.

Nothing, therefore, could be more touching, in a pastoral country like Palestine, than images of care or tenderness drawn from shepherd life, and such Jesus now introduced with surpassing beauty.[21]

[21] See Sermon by F. W. Robertson. Sermons, 2nd series, 283. John 10. 1—21.

"I have come into the world," said He, in effect, "to gather together into a great fold the new Israel of God. He who enters by the door is a true and authorized under-shepherd, but any who enter otherwise are not true leaders and shepherds, but are like thieves and robbers who climb over the wall for evil ends.

"When the true shepherd thus enters by the door, the sheep he tends hear his voice, and he calls them by name, and leads them out. And when he has led forth all his own, he goes before them, as the shepherds before their sheep, and his flock follow him, because they know his voice.[22] And, as a stranger, who is not the shepherd known by a flock, as soon as the sheep hear his voice, scatters it in alarm, so, while true shepherds are recognized as such by the spiritual Israel, pretenders are known by their words, and shunned." The drift of this parable, or allegory, was sufficiently transparent, but those at whom it was pointed were too self-satisfied to recognize it. They declared it unintelligible.

[22] Land and Book, 202—204. Tristram, 140, 141. Bibel. Lex. iii. 105.

Jesus, therefore, felt Himself necessitated to repeat the main thought, and thus enforce it on their attention.

"I see," said He, "that you do not understand the parable I have just delivered: let me explain it. I tell you with the utmost solemnity; I am the one only Door of the fold of the flock of God. Other teachers have sought to lead you in your day, but all who have done so, before my coming, are like the thieves and robbers who enter a fold over the wall. I frankly tell you I mean the priests and Rabbis, my enemies. They have refused to enter, through Me, the Door, and have rejected me. But the true sheep of God—the spiritual Israel—have not listened to them. Note well, as I

repeat it, I, alone, am the door of the true fold of the flock of God. If any one enter by me into the fold, as a shepherd or teacher and leader of the flock, he, himself, will be saved in the world to come, and preserved to life eternal, and will have free entrance to the sheep here, to lead them out to pasture. He who does not thus enter through me, seeks the sheep only for selfish and evil ends; like the thief, who, avoiding the door, climbs over into the fold, to steal, kill, and destroy. I may call myself, in opposition to such false shepherds, not only the door, but the Good Shepherd, for I have come, not to destroy the flock of God, but to give them true abiding life in my kingdom, and that with all fulness and delight of spiritual joys.

"I am, indeed, the Good Shepherd, for I come to lay down my life for the sheep. But he who is a hireling and not a true shepherd—he who seeks to lead and teach the flock of God, not from love and self-sacrifice, but for gain—the hypocrite who pretends to be a shepherd—sees the powers of evil coming like a ravening wolf, to tear the flock by persecutions; and flees, and leaves it to its fate, so that they snatch off many, and scatter all. He thus flees because he is only a hireling, thinking of himself and caring nothing for the sheep.

"I, once more, am the Good Shepherd, and no hireling, for I know my sheep, and they know me with such deep communion of love and spiritual life, as there is between my heavenly Father and myself; and I shall presently lay down my life for them. Yet, not for those of Israel alone. I have other sheep, of other lands, and them also I must lead into the one fold, that there may be but one flock,[23] under me, the one shepherd.

"But this triumphal issue can be reached only by my death and resurrection; yet I rejoice to die thus for the sheep, since the love of my heavenly Father rests on me, because I give myself for them. I die freely, of my own choice, a willing self-sacrifice. No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of myself.[24] I am sent forth by my Father, as the Messiah, and, as such, lay down my life and take it again; not to carry out any purpose of my own, but

[23] Not *fold*. The word is ποίμνη, a flock—not αὐλὴ, a fold, as in the earlier part of the verse.

[24] Schleiermacher's Predigten, iv. 65.

CHAP. LI.

to complete the great plan of salvation God has designed. It is in obedience to His divine command I thus freely give myself up to death, and it is to complete the gracious plan of mercy towards the flock which my death will redeem, that I shall rise again from the grave as their Great Shepherd, to guide them to heaven."

Had the bigoted crowd known the full significance of some of these words, they would have risen against Jesus once more; for the future admission of the heathen into the New Kingdom of God was more distinctly intimated than ever before. As the end of His work drew nearer, the narrow prejudices even of the Twelve were ever more constantly kept in view, and the thought that the kingdom He was founding must embrace all nations, daily enforced.

But neither this wide catholicity, which a Jew would have held as treason to his nation, nor the mysterious allusions to His own future, were rightly understood. The old slander that "He had a devil, and was mad in consequence, and not worthy to be listened to," rose from the lips of some, and the best that even the most liberal among the crowd could say, was the negative praise—"These are not the words of one who is possessed." Besides, though a devil might, doubtless, work some miracles through man as its instrument, it was impossible to believe that it either would or could work one so beneficent and stupendous as the opening of the eyes of the born blind.

# CHAPTER LII.

## A WANDERING LIFE.



IT was now near the end of Khislev—the cold month—equivalent to part of our November and December. The twenty-fifth of the month, which, according to Wieseler, fell, this year, on the 20th December, was, with the next seven days, a time of universal rejoicing:[1] for the Dedication Festival, in commemoration[2] of the renewal of the Temple worship, after its suspension under Antiochus Epiphanes,[3] was held through the week.[a]

Jesus, ever pleased to mingle in innocent joys, and glad to seize the opportunity for proclaiming the New Kingdom, which the gatherings of the season afforded, once more returned to Jerusalem to attend it. He had been in the neighbourhood since the Feast of Tabernacles, nearly three months before, and this visit would be the last, till His final entry, to die.[4]

The weather had been wet and rough,[5] so that He was fain to avail Himself, like the crowds, of the shelter of the arcade running along the east side of the Temple enclosure; known as Solomon's porch, from a fragment of the first Temple, left standing by Nebuchadnezzar.[6]

The rain drove the people from the open courts, and Jesus, like others, was in the Porch, apparently without His disciples. The time was fitted to wake the old temptation of ambition, had it had any charms. How easily might He eclipse the hero of all this rejoicing, and by His supernatural power achieve victories, compared with which those of Judas Maccabæus would be nothing! But He had far nobler aims.

The Pharisaic party, themselves, may have had such secret

[1] Lightfoot, on John 10. 22. Ewald, iv. 356

[2] τὰ ἐγκαίνια.

[3] B.C. 175—163. The profanation of the Temple was B.C. 167—164.

[4] John 10.22—42

[5] Augusti und De Wette's Bibel.

[6] Ant. xx. 9. 7

CHAP. LII. thoughts in connection with Him. Be this as it may, they now suddenly came and began to ask Him if He would not, at last, relieve their minds by some direct and express declaration whether He were the Messiah or not. It may be, He could read in their looks that He needed only to speak a word to have their support, and He knew that both they and the nation, at such a time, were ready to flame into universal enthusiasm for any leader who would undertake to lead them against Rome. But earthly ambition had no attractions for His pure spirit.

"We have waited long and anxiously," said they, "for some decisive word. If Thou art the Messiah, tell us openly."

"I have already told you," answered Jesus, "both by the witness of the miracles I have done in my Father's name, and in words; but you have not believed me, because, as I said not long ago, you are not my disciples, or, as I love to call them, my sheep. If you had been, you would have believed in me.[7] You may, yourselves, see that you are not of my flock, for those who are so listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, as sheep know and listen to the voice of their shepherd, and are known by him, and follow him. Nothing, indeed, can be more close and abiding than my relations to them, for I lead them not to mere earthly good, but give them eternal life, and am their shepherd hereafter as well as here; taking care that they shall never perish, and that no one, even beyond death, shall snatch them out of my hand. Moreover, being in my hand, they are, in effect, in that of my Father, for He is ever with me, and works by me. He gave them to me at first, and He still guards them, nor can any one snatch them from His hands, for He is greater than all the powers of earth and hell. Wonder not that I speak of their being both in my Father's hands and in mine, for I and the Father are One."

[7] John 10.22—42.

The excitable, fanatical crowd had listened patiently till the last words, which seemed the most audacious blasphemy —a claim of essential oneness with the Almighty. In a moment they were once more scattered in search of stones,

with which to kill Him, for what they deemed His crime, and presently gathered round Him again with them, to fell Him to the earth. But Jesus remained undismayed. "I have done many great works of mercy," said He, calmly, "which show that the Father is with me, because they could only come from the presence of His power. They are enough to show you that *He* thinks me no blasphemer. For which of these mighty works will you stone me?"

"We would not think of stoning Thee for a good work," answered the crowd; "it is for your blasphemy—that you, a man, should make yourself God."

"Is it not written in your Law," replied Jesus,[8] "of the rulers of Israel, the representatives and earthly embodiments of the majesty of Jehovah, your invisible King, '*I said, Ye are gods?*' If God Himself called them gods, to whom this utterance of His came,[9]—and you cannot deny the authority of Scripture,—how can you say of me,—whom the Father has consecrated to a far higher office than ruler, or even prophet—to that of Messiah; and whom He has not only thus set apart to this great office, but sent into the world clothed with the mighty powers I have shown, and the fulness of grace and truth you now see in me,—that I blaspheme, because I have said I am God's Son? Your unbelief in me, which is the ground of the charge, would have some excuse if I did not perform such works as prove me to have been sent by my Father. But if I do such works, then believe them, if you will not believe me; that you may thus learn and know[b] that what I have said is true—that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."

They had waited for a retractation, but had heard a defence. Instantly, hands were thrust out on every side, to lay hold on Him,[10] and lead Him outside the Temple to stone Him; but He shrank back into the crowd, and passing through it, escaped.

Jerusalem and Judea were evidently closed against Him, as Galilee had been for some time past. There seemed only one district in any measure safe,—the half-heathen territory of Perea, across the Jordan. The ecclesiastical authorities and the people at large, instead of accepting Him, and the

[8] Ps. 82. 6

[9] Meyer, De Wette and Augusti

[10] Verse 33.

spiritual salvation He offered, had become steadily more obdurate and hostile. It was necessary at last to give up all attempts to win them, and to retire, for the short time that yet remained to Him, to this safer district. He chose the part of it in which John had begun his ministrations; perhaps in hopes of a more hopeful soil, from the cherished remembrance of His predecessor; perhaps as a spot sacred to holy associations of His own.

Here, with His wonted earnestness, He once more proclaimed the New Kingdom, and was cheered by a last flicker of success; for crowds once more resorted to Him, many of whom became His disciples.[11] "John," said they, "did no miracles, great though he was, but his testimony to this Man, who was to come after him,—that He was greater than himself,—is true; for not only does He teach us the words of truth; He confirms them by mighty wonders, which show Him to be the Messiah." Jesus was reaping, as Bengel says, the posthumous fruit of the Baptist's work.

[11] John 10. 40—42.

The quiet retreat of Perea was, however, soon to be broken. The family of Bethany, to whom Jesus owed so many happy hours, had been in health when He left, but a message suddenly reached Him from the two sisters, Mary and Martha, the very simplicity of which still touches the heart: "Lord, he whom Thou lovest,—our brother Lazarus,—is sick." His love they felt would need nothing more.[12] The messengers doubtless expected that He would have returned with them at once, but He saw things in a higher light, and moved on a different spiritual plane. Instead of going with them therefore, He dismissed them with the intimation that the sickness would not really end in death; but would be overruled by God to His own glory, by disclosing that of His Son—Jesus Himself. It was from no indifference that He thus delayed, though it left His friends to bitter disappointment, and Himself to the suspicion of neglect. "He loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus," says John. But still He delayed, in obedience to a higher counsel than man's.

[12] John 11. 1—43

The messengers had taken a day to come, and it would take another for Jesus to go to Bethany, but though He knew this, He remained two days more in the place where

the sad news had reached Him. On the third day, however, He surprised His disciples, who had fancied that He hesitated from fear of His enemies, by telling them that He was about to return to Judea.

"The Rabbis and priests were seeking only the other day to stone Thee, Rabbi," said they in amazement—"and art Thou really going back into the very jaws of danger?"

"The time allotted me by God for my work," replied Jesus, "is not yet done, and so long as it lasts no one can harm me. The time appointed for a man, is like the hours of light given to a traveller for his journey. There is no fear of his stumbling in the day, because he sees the sun; but as he stumbles when it has set, so man, though he walk safely till the appointed time ends, can do so no longer when it is over. Till mine is over, I am safe."

Pausing a few minutes, He went on to tell them why He was going to Bethany, in spite of all danger. "Our friend Lazarus," said He, "has fallen asleep, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." Unwilling to expose themselves or their Master to unnecessary peril, their wishes read in these words a cause for remaining where they were. "To sleep is good for the sick," said they, thinking He spoke of natural sleep. But their hopes were speedily dashed. "Lazarus," said He, now openly, "is dead, and I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there to heal him from mere sickness. The far greater proof of my divine glory, which you will see in my raising him from the grave, would not have been given, and thus you would have lost the aid to still firmer trust in me, which is so necessary now I am so soon to leave you."

Such words might have at once quieted their fears and kindled their zeal, but they still saw in His return to Judea, only a journey to His own death. Thomas the Twin, at last broke silence—"It becomes us to do all that our Master commands, even when He asks us to risk our lives. Let us go with Him, that we may show our love and fidelity by dying with Him." A true-hearted but sad man!

It is clear that Jesus feared violence, for as He approached Bethany, He lingered outside the village, as if to learn how

CHAP. LII.

matters stood, before venturing farther. Nor was it without cause, for notwithstanding their friendship with Jesus, the family of Lazarus, moving in good society as they did, had many friends and connections amongst those hostile to Him, and a number of these had come to pay the customary visit of condolence to the two sisters.

The four days since the death had been sad ones in the little household. They had fasted all the day after it, and had since eaten nothing but an occasional egg, or some lentiles; for that was the only food allowed mourners, for the first seven days. The corpse, which had had a lamp burning beside it from the moment of death, as a symbol of the immortality of the soul, had been borne to the grave after a few hours;[13] an egg had been broken as a symbol of mortality: and the cottage left to the two survivors. The funeral procession had been sad enough, with its dirge flutes, and wailing hired women; the two sisters and their relations following, and then the neighbours and friends; for it was held a religious duty in all who could, to attend a corpse to the grave. At the grave's mouth, the men had chanted the sublime ninetieth Psalm in a slow circuit of seven times round the bier, on which lay the dead wrapped in white linen. The long procession, headed by the veiled women, had stopped thrice on the way to the grave, while the leader spoke words of comfort to the bereaved ones, and tender exhortations to passers by,—"Comfort ye, comfort ye, ye dear ones! Lift up your souls, lift up your souls! Come to me, all ye who are of sad and troubled heart, and take part in the sorrow of your neighbours."[14]

Once more in their desolate home, the sisters, with veiled heads, even in their own chamber, and with unsandaled feet, sat down on the earth, in the midst of a circle of at least ten friends or professional mourners; with rent clothes and dust on their heads. None spoke till the bereaved ones had done so, but every sentence of theirs was followed by some word of sympathy and comfort, and by the wails of the mourners.[15] And thus it would be for seven days, and had been for four, before Jesus arrived, for many friends had come from Jerusalem to comfort the two sisters.

[13] Generally about three hours after.

[14] Dukes, 247.

[15] Sepp, v. 349—351. Lightfoot, *in loc.*

Word was presently brought to the house, that Jesus had come, and, forthwith, Martha, true to her character as the more active of the two sisters, rose from the ground, where she and Mary had been sitting, and went out, wrapped in her mourning dress and deeply veiled, to go to Him; but Mary remained where she was, for she had not heard the good news.

"Lord," said Martha, when she saw Him, "if Thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died,"—as if she thought, "Why did He then delay?" But as she looked at Him her faith revived, and she added, "Yet though he be dead, I know that God will grant you your utmost prayer, even if it be to receive back Lazarus from the dead."

"Your brother will rise again," replied Jesus, in designedly ambiguous words, to lead Martha's faith from mere personal interest to higher thoughts. Martha understood Him only of the resurrection at the last day, in which she felt assured Lazarus would have part, and had hoped for something so much nearer and greater, that so vague an answer disappointed her. She could only find words to say, with sad resignation, that "she knew that he would rise," as Jesus had seemed to say, "at the last day."

It was well she answered thus, for Jesus presently used her words to turn her from mere personal interests, to Himself, and, in doing so, uttered that wondrous sentence which has carried hope and triumph to millions of the dying and the bereaved, and will do so while time and mortality endure. "I,"—and no other but I—"am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die"—words which we may paraphrase thus:—"I am He whose is the power to raise from the dead, and make alive for evermore. He that believeth in me, though his body die, will yet continue to live without break or interruption—for, till the resurrection, he will be in paradise, and after it, and by its means, he will enter on the fulness of life eternal. And every one who is still alive, and believes in me, will never die, in any true sense;

CHAP. LII.

for the death of the body is not really death, but the open gate into life eternal. Believest thou this?"

"Yea, Lord," sobbed out the stricken heart. "I believe that Thou art the King-Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world;" and having made this great confession, she went away to call her sister secretly, for fear of those hostile to Him among her own friends. "Mary," whispered she, "the Teacher is here, and calls for thee." She would not mention the name for caution.

It was enough. The next instant Mary was on the road to Jesus, who was still outside the village, in the place where Martha had met Him. The way to the grave was in that direction, and the friends, concluding she had gone thither to weep, kindly rose and followed her, that she might not be left to her lonely grief. Jesus could no longer remain hidden, but the presence of hostile witnesses confirmed the more strikingly the great miracle that was to follow.

Falling in tears at the feet of Jesus, and embracing them, Mary's full heart overflowed in the same lament as her sister's, for they had often spoken the same words to each other; "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." The presence of her friends, who she knew were no friends of His, hindered more. It was a moment fitted to move even a strong heart, for those around, with true Oriental demonstrativeness, wept and lamented aloud, along with Mary. But the sight of men who were filled with the bitterest enmity to Himself, joining in lamentations with Mary, His true-hearted friend—men with no sympathy for the highest goodness, but ready to chase it, in His person, from the earth, because it condemned their cold religious hypocrisy—showing natural tenderness while such malignity was in their hearts—roused His indignation, so that He visibly shuddered with emotion,[16] and had to restrain Himself by an earnest effort. Yet the cloud of righteous anger passed off in a moment, and sorrow for His friend, and for the grief of the loved one at His feet, asserted itself. Silent tears trickled down His cheeks, for, though He was the Son of God, He was no less truly than ourselves a man, moved by the sight of human sorrow.

[16] De Wette and Meyer.

The group of mourners were variously affected; the most kindly remarking how dearly He must have loved the dead man, that He should now weep so at his death. But the more malicious and hardened only saw in His tears a welcome proof of His helplessness, for had it been otherwise, could He not as well have cured Lazarus of his illness as give sight to the blind? The healing of the blind man must surely have been a cheat, for certainly He would have come to Bethany sooner, had He been able to do anything for His sick friend. The muttered words reached the ears of Jesus, and roused anew His indignation; and thus, with mingled anger and sorrow, He reached the grave.

Like most graves in the limestone districts of Palestine, it was a recess cut in the side of a natural cave, and closed by a huge stone fitted into a groove.[17]

[17] Capt. Wilson, Pal. Fund Repts. 1870, p. 66

In this gloomy niche lay Lazarus, swathed from head to foot in loose linen wrappings, and now four days dead.

"Take away the stone," said Jesus.

But Martha, with her wonted matter-of-fact nature, shrank at the words, for she thought of the awful spectacle of her brother, now hastening to corruption. Christ's words about the resurrection had taken away any hope of seeing Lazarus alive again till the great day, and she would rather the sacred remains were left undisturbed. A gentle reproof from Jesus was, however, enough to let her leave Him to His will. "Did not I send word to thee by thy messenger that if thou wouldst only believe thou shouldst see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone.

Jesus had already, in the stillness of His own breast, communed with the Father, and knew, in Himself that His prayer that Lazarus might be restored to life had been heard. Lifting up His eyes to heaven, He now uttered His thanks that it had been so. "Father, I thank thee that Thou hast heard me—yet I knew that Thou hearest me always, for Thy will is ever mine, and mine is ever Thine. But I thank Thee thus, for the sake of those who stand around, that they may be convinced that what I do is done in Thy power, and that I am assuredly sent forth from Thee."

What followed is best given in the words of St. John. "And

CHAP. LII.

when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice, LAZARUS, COME FORTH.[18] And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face had been bound about with a napkin—(that had tied up his jaw four days before, when it fell, in death). Jesus saith unto them, 'Loose him, and let him go (home):'" and he who had been dead, now freed from his grave-clothes, himself returned in the fulness of youthful strength and health to the cottage from which he had been carried forth on a bier four days before.

[18] John 11.43, 44.

Of the after-history of Lazarus, with one momentary exception, we know nothing, for none of the numerous traditions and legends respecting him are reliable. He is said to have been thirty years old when he was raised from the dead, and to have lived for thirty years after; to have been of royal descent; to have owned a whole quarter of Jerusalem, and to have been, by profession, a soldier. His bones were said to have been found in the year A.D. 890, with those of Mary Magdalene, in the island of Cyprus! and the remains thus honoured were carried to Constantinople. Other traditions take him to Marseilles, and speak of him as the first Christian Bishop of that city.[19] But the very extravagance of these legends shows their worthlessness as history.

[19] Hofmann, 357, 358.

The results of the miracle were momentous to Jesus Himself. Many of the party of the Rabbis who had come to comfort the sisters, found themselves constrained to believe in one whose claims were attested by an act so transcendent, and so indisputable. But some justified all that Jesus had said of their malignity by not only shutting their eyes to what they were determined not to admit, but by playing the informer to the ecclesiastical authorities.

The great ecclesiastical court of the nation, known in the Talmud as the "Sanhedrim," had been in abeyance for many years, for there is no trace of it during the whole period of the Herods, or of the Romans.[20] The name, indeed, occurs in the New Testament, but it is simply as the Greek word for "an assembly,"[c] which was adopted by the Rabbis, at a later period. Herod had broken up the great Rabbinical

[20] Jost, i. 278.

council, and, henceforth, the only authorities recognized as the fountains of Jewish Law were the schools of such Rabbis as Hillel and Schammai. There was no such thing as a legal Jewish court, which had power to enforce its decisions. The authority granted to the leading schools was only a tribute of confidence in their soundness and wisdom. Hence, in the days of Christ, there was no legal Jewish court in existence, and the criminal processes mentioned in connection with Him, were only acts of assemblies which the high priest for the time, the only representative of the old Theocracy recognized by the supreme Roman authority, called together in angry haste, informally, and which acted by no judicial rules of procedure.[21]

[21] Jost, i. 27

Such an illegal gathering was summoned by the Sadducean chief priests and the leading Pharisaic Rabbis, to discuss what should be done respecting Jesus, now that the incontestable fact of the resurrection of Lazarus had crowned all His preceding miracles. Having no idea of a Messiah apart from political revolution, to be inaugurated by Him, it seemed likely that, if something were not done to put Him out of the way, the excitement of the people, through His miracles, would become irresistible, and lead to a national rising, fiercer even than that of Judas the Galilæan. To the popular party, represented by the Pharisees present, this would be no undesirable issue; but the courtly Sadducees shrank from any disturbance, fearing that, in the end, the Romans would crush it with their legions, and, as a punishment, abolish the hierarchical constitution, which gave them their wealth and position; and, with it, the ecclesiastical and civil laws which flattered the nation with an illusory independence.

The Temple, and all the far-reaching vested interests bound up with it, had long existed only on sufferance, and would at once perish in the storm of a national insurrection; and the nation, stripped of its local laws, so vital to a theocracy, would be secularized into a part of Rome, with the hated imperial heathen law, instead of the laws of God and the Rabbis.

The acting high priest at this time was Joseph Caiaphas.

He had been appointed by the procurator Valerius Gratus, shortly before that governor left the province, in A.D. 25—when Jesus was about twenty years of age; and he continued to hold his great office till the year A.D. 36, when he was removed by the proconsul Vitellius, shortly after the recall of Pilate. He was, in every way, a creature of the Romans, and, as such, received little respect from the nation, though his dignity secured him official authority.

Rising in the meeting, which had been hitherto very divided and irresolute as to the wisest course to be taken, Caiaphas begged to give his opinion—

"You know nothing at all," said he, "else you would not have so much questioning and discussing. You have not considered that it is expedient for you, in view of your interests as priests and Rabbis, that this one man should die, to save Israel, as such, from the destruction that threatens it, if you let Him stir up a Messianic revolt; for, in that case, the whole nation must perish. The Romans will come with their legions and close our Temple, annul our independence by abolishing our laws, and waste us with fire and sword."

There could be no misconception of words so plain. They were a distinct advice to those present to put Jesus to death, as the one way to save themselves, and maintain things as they were in Church and State.[22] Words so momentous, for they decided the fate of Jesus, might well seem to St. John no mere human utterance, but the involuntary expression through unworthy lips, of the near approach of the supreme act in the divine plan of mercy to mankind.

[22] John 11. 47—54.

From that day the death of Jesus was only a question of time and opportunity. Henceforth, the Jewish primate and his suffragans kept steadily in view—in concert with their hereditary and deadly enemies, the Rabbis—the arrest of Jesus, and His subsequent death. Their officers, or any one hostile to Him, might apprehend Him at any moment. It was clearly no longer possible for Him to show Himself openly, and He, therefore, retired with His disciples to a city called Ephraim, now difficult of identification. It seems to have been in the wild uncultivated hill-country, north-

east of Jerusalem, between the central towns and the Jordan valley. A village now known as El Taiyibeh, on a conical hill, commanding a view of the whole eastern slope of the country, the valley of the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, though only sixteen miles from Jerusalem, has been thought by Dr. Robinson the site.[23] It answers at least in its secluded privacy, and the ready access it offers to the still wilder regions beyond.

23 Dict. of Bible, *Art.* "Ephraim."

Only a few weeks remained of our Saviour's life, and these He had to spend as a fugitive, to whom no place was safe. He had, however, the joy of seeing the old enthusiasm of the multitudes revived, for Matthew and Mark both speak of the vast numbers who followed Him in this closing period,[24] attracted, doubtless, more by the fame of His past miracles, and by continuous displays of the same supernatural power towards the diseased of every kind, than by His teaching. Yet there must have been not a few "sheep" in such vast gatherings. The clouds were parting as the day closed, and were being lighted with sunset colours, before the night darkened all.

24 Matt. 19. 1, 2. Mark 10. 1.

From Ephraim He soon passed over the Jordan, to what, for the moment, seemed a safer retreat. The lesser excommunication, which had driven Him from the synagogues of Galilee and Judea, had perhaps expired, or the bann may not have been effective in Perea; for He once more had access to these assemblies on the Sabbaths, and was allowed, as before, to teach the people, who were thus most easily reached. It was impossible, however, that He could long avoid collision with some or other of the countless Rabbinical laws, which fettered every movement of free spiritual life, and, as in the past, the fanatical Sabbath laws offered the first occasions of trouble. Two instances are recorded by St. Luke.[25]

25 Luke 13. 10—21; 14. 1—6.

As He was teaching on a Sabbath in the synagogue of one of the outlying towns of Perea—half Jewish, half heathen —He noticed in the audience, behind the lattice which separated the women from the men, a poor creature drawn together by a rheumatic affection, which had bowed her frame so terribly that she could not raise herself erect. As

she painfully struggled into her place, Jesus saw her, and doubtless read, in her supplicating looks, and in the very fact that she had come to the House of God in spite of such physical infirmity, an evidence that she was a fit subject for His pitying help. Rising, and calling across the congregation to her, the welcome words fell on her ears—"Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." The cure was instantaneous. In a moment she was once more straight and whole, after eighteen years of deformity, and her irrepressible thanks to God for the mercy vouchsafed her, rang through the synagogue, and made a great commotion.

The head of the congregation, however, was a cold Rabbinical pedant. Intensely professional, he could see nothing but an irregularity. It was the Sabbath day, and the Rabbis had decided that no cure was lawful on the Sabbath except where death was imminent. "Silence," cried he, indignantly, "there are six days in which men ought to work; it would be much more becoming if this person were to remember that: and if you, for your part, want to be healed by him, see that you come on a week-day, so that he have no excuse for breaking the holy Sabbath, by doing the work of curing you on it." [d]

Indignation flashed from the eyes of Jesus, and turning to the speaker, He denounced his heartless formalism, so utterly opposed to the true religion of which he was the official representative. "You, and the whole class who think with you, are hypocritical actors," said He; "your words prove it, for they are contradicted by your daily conduct. Do you not loose your asses, or your oxen, from the manger, where they are tied, on the Sabbath, and lead them away to water them? And if so, ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, and, as such, one of God's own people—who is of unspeakably greater worth than any ox or ass, to be loosed to-day, though it *be* the Sabbath, from this bond, with which Satan has chained her, for now, eighteen years?"

There could be no reply to such a vindication. The ruler and his party were silenced, and put to shame before the quick-witted audience. The worship of the letter had received another deadly blow.

CHAP. LII.

A second incident, very similar, occurred soon after. One of the leading Pharisees had invited Jesus to dine with him on the Sabbath, as the day specially devoted to social entertainments by the Rabbis,[26]—with the sinister design of watching Him and reporting to those in authority.[27] A number of Rabbis and Pharisees had been invited to meet Him, but they had not yet lain down to their meal,[28] when a man, ill with dropsy, entered the open door of the house, with others who dropped in, with Oriental freedom,[29] to look on, and stand about. In his case, no doubt, the motive of his coming was that he might attract the notice of Jesus. He was afraid, however, to speak, for fear of those present, and patiently waited to see if Jesus would, of His own accord, cure him. He had not long to wait. Looking at him, Jesus turned to the guests with the question He had asked before, in similar circumstances—"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or is it not?" In their consciences they could not say it was not, but few men have the courage of their opinions, when current sentiment runs the other way; so they were silent. But silence was a virtual affirmative, for, if it were wrong, it was their bounden duty, as the public guardians of religion, to say so. Passing over, therefore, to the swollen and wretched being, He put His hand on him; cured him at once, and sent him away. Then, turning to the confused and baffled company, He completed their discomfiture by an appeal similar to that which He had made in the case of the woman healed shortly before. "Which of you, let me ask, if his son,[e] or even only his ox, had fallen into a pit, would not immediately draw him out, on discovering it—even on the Sabbath?" No wonder that nothing further was said on the subject.

The couches on which the guests reclined at meals were arranged so as to form three sides of a square, the fourth being left open to allow the servants to bring in the dishes. The right-hand couch was reckoned the highest, and the others, the middle, and the lowest, respectively, and the places on each couch were distinguished in the same way, from the fact that the guest who reclined with his head, as it were, in the bosom of him behind, seemed to be the lower of

[26] Lightfoot, *in loc.*
[27] Luke 14. 1—24
[28] Verse 7.
[29] Stephen's Incidents of Travel in Egypt, &c., i. 32.

the two. The highest place on the highest couch, was, thus, the "chief place;" and human nature, the same in all ages, inevitably made it be eagerly coveted, and as precedence was marked by distance from it, there was an almost equal anxiety to get as near it as possible. With the vanity and self-righteousness of a moribund caste, there was no little scheming among the Rabbis for the best place, and much anxiety on the part of the host not to give offence; for to place a Rabbi below any one not a Rabbi, or below a fellow Rabbi of lower standing, or younger, was an unpardonable affront, and a discredit to religion itself. The intolerable pride that had made one of their order, in the days of Alexander Jannæus, seat himself between Alexander and his queen, on the ground that "wisdom" made its scholars sit among princes, remained unchanged. Such petty ambition, so unworthy in public teachers of morals and religion, and so entirely in contrast with His own instructions to His disciples, to seek no distinction but that of the deepest humility, did not fail to strike the GREAT GUEST, who had calmly taken the place assigned Him. Addressing the company—"You are wrong," said He, "in revealing your wishes, and obtruding your self-assertion in such a way. Let me counsel you how to act. If invited to a marriage feast, never take the chief place on the couches, lest some one of higher standing for learning or piety come, and your host ask you to go down to a lower place, to make room for the more honoured guest. Take, rather, the lowest place, when you enter, that your host, when he comes in, may invite you to take a higher, and thus honour you before all. Pride is its own punishment, in this, as in far graver matters, for, whether before God or man, he who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

It was an old custom in Israel to invite the poorer neighbours to the special meals on the consecrated flesh of offerings not used at the altar, and on similar half-religious occasions, to brighten their poverty for the moment, by kindly hospitality. This beautiful usage was, in the time of Jesus, among the things of the past, for the priest or Rabbi of His day would have trembled at the thought of being defiled by

contact with people whose position made it impossible to be as scrupulous in the observance of the endless legal injunctions demanded, as themselves.

The meal at which Jesus was now present was very possibly one to which, in old times, such very different guests would have been asked. Or, it may be, the luxury displayed drew the attention of one so simple in His habits. Not a few neighbours, in very different circumstances from the guests, had likely entered, to look on and listen, but caste looked at them askance, as if they were an inferior race. Noticing this, our Lord addressed Himself to the host in a friendly way:—

"Have you ever thought what hospitality would yield you most pleasure? When you wish on special occasions to give a dinner or supper, let me tell you what you would always look back upon with the purest joy. Do not invite your rich friends to it, or your family or kinsmen, or well-to-do neighbours. They will invite you in return, and this will destroy the worth of your act, for which you expect a recompense from God at the resurrection. Instead of such guests, invite the poor, the hungry, the lame, the maimed, and the blind. If you entertain such, they will reward you richly by their gratitude, and if you have invited them from an honest heart, as a duty, God Himself will remember it at the resurrection of the righteous."

One of the guests had listened attentively. The mention of the resurrection of the righteous, naturally, under the circumstances, raised the thought of the heavenly banquet which the Rabbis expected to follow that event. "Blessed are those," said he, "who shall eat bread at the great feast in the Kingdom of God, after the resurrection. It would, indeed, be well to give such entertainments as Thou hast named, which would be thus so richly repaid in the world to come."

This remark gave Jesus an opportunity of delivering a parable which must have run terribly counter to the prejudices of the company. The spirit of caste that prevailed in the hierarchical party, and their utter want of sympathy for the down-trodden masses, were abhorrent to His whole

CHAP. LII.

nature. It was daily clearer that the religious and moral impulse by which He was to revolutionize the world, would never come from Israel as a nation. The opportunity had been offered and even pressed, but it had been rejected, and hence He was free to proclaim the great truth, which, for a time, He had held back, that the Heathen, as well as the Jew, was invited, on equal terms, to the privileges of the New Kingdom of God. It was specially necessary in these last months of His life to make this prominent, that the minds of the disciples, above all, might be prepared for a revolution of thought so momentous and signal. He, therefore, now, took every opportunity of showing that the invitations of the New Kingdom, in fulfilment of the eternal purpose of God, were to be addressed as freely to heathen as to Israel, and that the religion He was founding was one of spirit, and truth, and liberty, for the WHOLE WORLD. This revelation, so transcendent in the history of the race, He once more disclosed, had they been able to understand Him, at the Pharisee's table.

[30] Luke 14. 15, 24.

"A certain man," said He, as if in answer to the last speaker, "made a great supper, and invited many guests;[30] doing so early, that they might have ample time to prepare, and keep themselves free from other engagements. When the hour fixed for the banquet came, he sent his servant—as is usual—once more to those invited, to say that all was ready, and to pray them to come. But though they had had ample time to make all arrangements, they were still alike busy and unconcerned about the invitation, and, as if by common agreement, each in turn excused himself from accepting it. 'I have just bought a field,' said one, 'and must go and see it—I beg your master will hold me excused'—and went off to his land. 'It is impossible for me to come,' said another, 'for I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and am on the point of starting to try them.' A third begged to be excused because he had only just married, and therefore could not come, as he had a feast of his own.

"The servant had, therefore, to return to his master with this sorry list of excuses, each of which was a marked affront. 'I shall see that my feast has not been prepared for nothing,'

said he to the servant—'go out, at once, to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in all the poor, the maimed, the blind, and the lame you can find, that my table may be filled.'

"There was still room, however, after this had been done. 'Go outside the city to the country roads and hedgeways,' said the householder, 'and gather any waifs and beggars you find, and compel them to come in, for my house must be filled, and none of the men I invited to my supper will taste it.'"

Had the hearers but known it, this parable was a deadly thrust at their most cherished prejudices. The priests and Rabbis, leaders of the nation, had been invited again and again by Jesus and His disciples, to the spiritual banquet of the New Kingdom, but they had despised the invitation, on any excuse, or on none. The poor and outcast people, the sinners and publicans, and the hated multitude, who neglected the Rabbinical rules, had then been summoned, and had gladly come, and, now, the invitation was to go forth to those outside Israel—the abhorred heathen—and they, too, were to come freely, and sit down at the great table of the kingdom of the Messiah, with no conditions or disabilities; while they who, in their pride, had refused to come, were finally rejected.

It was the proclamation, once more, of the mighty truth which might well be too hard for those who first heard it, to understand, since it is imperfectly realized after nineteen centuries—that external rites and formal acts are of no value with God, in themselves: that He looks at the conscience alone: that neither circumcision, nor sacrifices, nor legal purifications, nor rigid observance of Sabbath laws, nor fasts, but the state of the heart, determines the relation of man to God.

Before leaving the world, our Lord would put it beyond question that His religion knew no caste, or national privilege: that it was independent of the cumbrous machinery of rite and ceremony which had crushed the life out of the religion of the Old Testament; and that it could reign, in its divine perfection, in any human heart that opened itself to the Spirit of God.

## CHAPTER LIII.

### IN PEREA.

CHAP. LIII.

Luke 14. 25—35.

THE incident of the Sabbath meal, in the house of the Pharisee, had occurred as Jesus was journeying by slow stages towards Jerusalem. He had long ago felt that to go thither would be to die; but His death, in whatever part of the country He might be apprehended, was already determined by His enemies, and it was necessary for the future of His Kingdom that He should not perish obscurely, like John, in some lonely fortress, but with such publicity, and so directly by the hands of the upholders of the Old Theocracy, as to leave their deliberate rejection of His teaching in no doubt, and to bring home to them the guilt of His death.

Yet He was in no hurry. It was still some time till the Passover, and He advanced leisurely on His sad journey, through the different villages and towns, teaching in the synagogues on the Sabbaths, and anywhere, day by day, through the week. Meanwhile, the miracles which He wrought before continually increasing multitudes excited in Herod, the local ruler, the same fear of a political rising as had led him to imprison the Baptist.

In spite of our Lord's earnest effort to discourage excitement, by damping every worldly hope or ambition in the crowds that followed Him, and leaving no question of His utter refusal to carry out the national programme of a political Messiah, Herod was so alarmed that he made efforts to apprehend Him. Had the throngs increased with His advance from place to place, as they well might, so shortly before the Passover, He would have entered Jerusalem with

a whole army of partisans, and compromised Himself at once with the Roman authorities.

He, therefore, spared no efforts to discourage and turn back to their homes those whom He saw attracted to Him from other than spiritual motives. He wished none to follow Him who had not counted the cost of doing so, and had not realized His unprecedented demands from His disciples. Instead of courting popular support, now that His life was in such danger, He raised these demands, and refused to receive followers on any terms short of absolute self-surrender and self-sacrifice to His cause, though He had nothing whatever to offer in return beyond the inward satisfaction of conscience, and a reward in the future world, if the surrender had been the absolutely sincere and disinterested expression of personal devotion to Himself.

"Consider well," said He, "before you follow me farther. I desire no one to do so who does not without reserve devote himself to me and my cause. He must tear himself from all his former connections and associations, and offer up, as a willing sacrifice, the claims of father, mother, wife, children, brother, or sister—and even his own life, if necessary, that he may be in no way hindered from entire devotion to me and my commands. Short of this, no one can be my disciple. Nor can he who is not willing to bear shame and suffering for my sake. You cannot be my disciples unless you are ready to be virtually condemned to die for being so; unless, as it were, you already put on your shoulders the weight of the cross on which you are to be nailed for confessing my name.

"It is, indeed, no light matter, but needs the gravest consideration. You know how men weigh everything beforehand in affairs of cost or danger: much more is it needful to do so in this case. No man would be so foolish as to begin building a house without first finding out the cost, and seeing if he can meet it. He will not lay the foundation, and run the risk of not being able to do more, for he knows that to do so would make him the scoff of his neighbours. Nor would any king or prince, at war with another, march out against him, without thinking whether he could likely,

with ten thousand men, overcome an enemy coming with twice as many. If he feel that the chances are against him, he will seek to make peace before his enemy come near, and will send an embassy to him to propose conditions. No less, but rather much more, careful consideration of the dangers you run; of the greatness of my demands; of the losses you must endure; of the shame and suffering certain to follow—are needed before casting in your lot with me.

"Yet, as I have said elsewhere, before; it is the noblest of all callings to be my disciple, if you really can accept my conditions. For to him who is truly my follower, it is given of God to keep alive and spread the spiritual life of men, as salt keeps sound and fresh that which is seasoned by it. My disciples are designed by God to be the Spiritual Salt of the Earth. But if the honour be greater, so much the greater is the responsibility; for if a follower of mine, through hankering after worldly interests, lose his spiritual life and thus lose his power to further my cause, how can he hope to regain it? He is like salt that has lost its strength, and, as such worthless salt is cast out of men, so he will be cast out of God, from the kingdom of the Messiah, at the great day. He who is thoughtful, let him think of all this!"

A great English writer has pictured an imaginary character as having a sweet look of goodness, which drew out all that was good in others. There must have been some such divine attraction to the poor and outcast in the looks and whole person of our Lord. India is not more caste-ridden than the Judea in which He lived. The aristocracy of religion looked with hatred and disdain on the masses of their own nation, and with bitterness still deeper on all men of foreign birth. The ruin of long, disastrous years of civil war and foreign domination, had covered the land with misery. The reign of the Herods had been a continued effort to rebuild burned towns, and restore exhausted finances; but the Roman tax-gatherer had followed, vampire-like, and had drained the nation of its life-blood, till it was sinking, as all Roman provinces sank, sooner or later, into general decay. In a land thus doubly afflicted by social proscription, and by ever-increasing social distress—a land

of mutual hatreds and wrongs—the suffering multitudes hailed with instinctive enthusiasm one who, like Jesus, ignored baleful prejudices; taught the sunken and hopeless to respect themselves still, by showing that He, at least, still spoke kindly and hopefully to them, in all their sinfulness and misery; and by His looks and words, no less than by His acts, seemed to beckon the unfortunate to gather round Him as their friend. It must have spread far and wide, from His first entrance on His ministry, that He had chosen a publican as one of His inmost circle of disciples, and that He had not disdained to mingle with the most forlorn and sunken of the nation, even in the friendliness of the table or the cottage. From many a windowless hovel, where the smoke of the household fire made its way out only by the door, and the one earth-floored apartment was shared by the wretched family, with the fowls, or even beasts they chanced to own[1]—a hovel which the priest or Rabbi would have died rather than defile himself by entering—the story spread how the great Galilæan teacher had not only entered, but had done so to raise the dying, and to bless the living. All over the land it ran from mouth to mouth that, for the first time, a great Rabbi had appeared who was no respecter of persons, but let Himself be anointed by a poor penitent sinner, and sat in the booth with a hated publican, and mingled freely in the market-place with the crowds whose very neighbourhood others counted pollution. Still more, it was felt by the proscribed millions, the Cagots and Pariahs of a merciless theocracy, that He was their champion, by the very fact that He was deemed an enemy by the dominant caste; for opposition to it was loyalty to them.

Hence, the multitudes who, on this last journey, especially, gathered round Jesus with friendly sympathy and readiness to receive His instructions, were largely composed of the degraded and despised—the "publicans and sinners" from far and near. The Rabbis enjoined[2] that a teacher should keep utterly aloof from such people, "even if one had the worthy design of exhorting them to read the Law"—that is, even with the view of reclaiming them. It was a sign that

[1] Furrer, 222.

[2] Mechilta, f. 37. c.

CHAP. LIII.

wisdom did not dwell with one if he went near the thief or the usurer, even when they had turned from their evil ways.[3] The superstitious reverence demanded for those who kept the Rabbinical laws strictly, was only equalled by the intense loathing of the ignorant commonalty. No Rabbi, or Rabbi's scholar, might on any account marry a daughter of the Am-ha-aretz—or unlearned—for the gross multitude were an abomination, and their wives loathsome vermin; and the most repulsive crime known to the[4] Law was no worse than to marry among them.[5] No one might walk on a journey with a "common man." It was sternly forbidden to pollute the Law by being seen to read it before one. Their witness was refused in the Jewish courts, and it was prohibited to give testimony in their favour: no secret was to be told them: they could not be guardians of orphans, nor allowed to have charge of the alms-box of the synagogue; and if they lost anything, no notice of its having been found was to be given them.

[3] Tanchuma. fol. 3. 2.

[4] Deut. 27. 21.

[5] Pesachim, fol. 49. 2.

No wonder that the Rabbis, and the hierarchical party at large, owned that "the hatred of the common people towards the 'wise' was greater than that of the heathen towards Israel, and that the wives hated the dominant caste even more fiercely than their husbands."[6]

[6] Eisenmenger, i. 340, 341.

That Jesus should outrage the established laws of privilege and exclusiveness, by allowing those to follow Him whom Rabbis would not allow to approach them, and, still worse, by receiving them kindly, and eating with them, was a bitter offence to the Pharisees and scribes. In their eyes, He was degrading Himself by consorting with the "unclean and despicable." Nor could they say anything more fitted to excite the mortal hatred of their class against Him.

The storm of bitter murmurings erelong reached the ears of our Lord, and He at once seized the opportunity to define His position unmistakably, and show that the course He took was in keeping with His whole aim.

"Let me ask you," said He, to some irritated Rabbis, who murmured at seeing Him, on one occasion, surrounded by "publicans and sinners,"[7] "who of you, if he had a flock of a hundred sheep, and one of them were to go astray, would

[7] Luke 15. 1—32.

not leave the ninety and nine on the pastures, and go off after the one that was lost, till he found it? And when he had done so, would he not lay it on his shoulders gladly, and carry it back to the flock? and, when he had come home, would he not call together his friends and neighbours, to rejoice with him at his having found the sheep that was lost?

"You scribes and Pharisees,—Rabbis,—lawyers,—think you are so righteous, that you need no repentance. You speak of some of your number, as having never committed a sin in their lives; of some whose only sin has been such a thing as having once put the phylacteries on his forehead before those on his arm; and call some the 'perfectly righteous.'[8] Let me tell you, that all men as such are the great flock of God,—for all are His sons,—and that when one who has gone astray, and has lived in sin, comes to himself and repents, there is greater joy in heaven over his return, than over ninety and nine, who, like you, think they have no need of repentance. And if this be the case in heaven, how much more ought I, here on earth, to rejoice that many such penitent ones come to me, than at your coming in proud self-sufficiency to boast that you need nothing at my hand."

[8] Hor. Heb. iii. 154. Eisenmenger, i. 343.

"Or," continued He, "I ask you,—suppose a poor woman who had only ten drachmæ,[a] were to lose one in one of the dark windowless hovels, in which so many of our people in these evil days live, would she not light a lamp and sweep the floor over, and spare no pains in seeking till she found it? And when she had found it, would she not call together her friends and neighbours, and ask them to rejoice with her for having found the drachma that was lost? In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, in the highest heaven, over one such sinner as those you so bitterly despise, who turns and repents. Well, therefore, may I gladly receive them, and mingle with them, when they come to me to learn the way back to God.

"Let me tell you a parable.

"A certain man had two sons. And the younger of these said to his father,—'Father, give me I pray you, the portion of the property that falls to me. I am the younger son, and

CHAP. LIII.

[9] Deut. 21. 17. De Wette's Heb. Jüd. Archäologie, 158.

inherit only half as much as my elder brother,[9] but I pray you let me have it.' The father, on this, divided between the two all his living, retaining, however, the larger share of the elder son in his hands till his own death, as he might have done with that of the younger son also. *His* share, however, he gave into the young man's own hands.

"But before long, the younger son began to dislike the restraint of his father's house, and gathering all together, set off for a distant country, and there gave his passions the reins, and lived in such riot, that erelong his whole means were scattered. But, now, when he had spent his all, a great famine arose in the country, and he began to be in distress. At last it went so hard with him, that he was glad to ask one of the citizens to give him anything at all to do, whatever it was, to get bread. He was, thereupon, sent into the man's fields, to be his swineherd, a sadly shameful occupation for a Jew! Yet, after all, he did not get even the food for which he had bargained, for neither his master nor any one else thought of him, and he was left to starve. He even longed to fill himself with the pods of the carob-tree, which are given to swine, and are sometimes eaten by the very poor,[10] but no man gave him any even of them.

[10] Tristram, 360. Land and Book, 21.

"In his loneliness and sore trouble, he began to reflect. 'How many labourers and household servants of my father,' said he to himself, 'have more bread than they can eat, while I, his son, am dying here of want. I will arise, and go back to my father, and will confess my guilt and unworthiness, and tell him how deeply I feel that I have sinned against heaven and done great wrong towards him. I will say that I feel I am no longer worthy to be called his son, and will ask him to treat me like one of his hired labourers, and will tell him that I will gladly work with them for my daily bread, so that he receive me again.'

"He had no sooner resolved to do this, than he rose to return to his father's house. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and knew him, and ran out to meet him, full of tender compassion, and fell on his neck and kissed him tenderly. And the son said to him, 'I have sinned against God and against thee, and am not worthy that

thou shouldest any longer call me thy son.' He could not say what he had intended besides, when he saw how fondly his father bent over him, notwithstanding his sins and folly. Nor was more needed; for his father called out to his servants, 'Bring me a robe, the best there is, that he may have my finest; and put it on him; and put a ring on his finger, and sandals on his feet; he shall no longer, like a slave, be without either; and bring the fatted calf and kill it. We shall have a feast to-day and be merry, for my son, lost and dead, as I thought, in a strange land, is once more home:[11] dead by his sins, he is alive again by repentance: a lost wanderer, he has returned to the fold.'

[11] The ungodly are called *the dead.* Jalkut Rubeni, fol. 177. c. 3

"The elder son, meanwhile, had been in the field with the labourers, but now came towards home. And as he drew near, he heard music and dancing. Calling one of the servants, he thereupon asked what had happened, and was told that his brother had come home, and that his father was so glad to have him once more safe and sound, that he had had the best calf killed, and given for a feast to the household.

"But now, instead of rejoicing over his brother's return, the elder son took amiss such gladness of his father, at having him safely back again, and would not go into the house at all, or take any part in the rejoicings. The father, therefore, ever kind and gentle, went out to him to soothe him, and to beg him to come in. All he could say, however, failed to soften his heart, and he vented his discontent in angry reproaches: 'I have served you for many a year, more like a slave than a son, and have obeyed you in every particular, and yet you never gave me a kid, far less a fatted calf, that I might have a little enjoyment with my friends. But when this fellow, who is indeed your son, though I will not call him my brother,—this fellow who has spent your money on harlots,—has come back, you have killed the fatted calf for him.'

"'My son,' replied the father, mildly, 'have you forgotten that you have been always by my side, while your brother has been far away from me, or that all that I have belongs to you as my heir? Surely all this should raise you above such hard judgments and jealous thoughts. What

CHAP. LIII.

could we do but rejoice when a long-lost son has come back again to his father's house?'"

The parables of the Lost Sheep and of the Lost Piece of Silver had been enforced by the noblest of all the parables. Henceforth, for all ages, it was proclaimed beyond the possibility of misconception, that, in the teaching of Jesus, God looks with unspeakably greater favour on the penitent humility of "the sinner," with its earnest of gratitude and love, than on cold correctness in which the heart has no place.

We are indebted to St. Luke for some other fragments of the teaching of these last weeks.

Among the great multitudes who had thronged after Him, the publicans of the district were especially noticeable.[12] Many of them were, doubtless, in a good position in life, and some even rich, but all were exposed to peculiar temptations in their hated calling. Not a few seem to have listened earnestly to the first Teacher who had ever treated them as men with souls to save, and it was of the greatest importance to them that they should have wise and true principles for their future guidance. The following parable seems to have been delivered specially to them, as part of an address when they had gathered in more than usual numbers.

[12] Luke 14. 25; 15. 1; 16 1—13.

"A certain rich man had a steward, to whom he left the entire charge of his affairs. He learned, however, from some sources, that this man was acting dishonestly by him, and scattering his goods; so he called him and let him know what he had heard, telling him, at the same time, to make out and settle all his accounts, as he could no longer hold his office.

"The steward, knowing that he was guilty, was at a loss what to do. 'I cannot dig,' said he, to himself, 'for I have not been accustomed to it, and I am ashamed to beg.' At last he hit on a plan which he thought would serve his end, and at once set himself to carry it out. Going to all his master's tenants, one by one, he asked each how much rent or dues he had to pay, though, in fact, he knew all this beforehand. When told, he pretended to have been commissioned, in compliance with his own suggestion, to lower the amount in each case; and he thus secured the favour of all. For

example, he went to one and asked him 'How much owest thou to my lord?' and when told 'A hundred pipes of oil,' bade him take back his bill, and write another, instead, for fifty. A second, who owed a hundred quarters of wheat, he told to make out a fresh writing with only eighty. In this way, by leading them to think him their benefactor, he made sure of friends, who would open their houses to him when he had been dismissed.

"Some time after, when his master heard how cleverly he had secured his own ends, he could not help admiring his shrewdness. And, in truth, it is a fact, that bad men like this steward—the sons of this world—not of the next—are wiser in their dealings with their fellows, than the sons of light—my disciples—are in theirs with their brethren, sons of my heavenly Kingdom, like themselves.

"As the master of that steward commended him for his prudence, though it was so worldly and selfish, I, also, must commend to you a prudence of a higher kind in your relations to the things of this life. By becoming my disciples, you have identified yourselves with the interest of another Master than Mammon, the god of this world—whom you have hitherto served—and have before you another course and aim in life. You will be represented to your former master as no longer faithful to him, for my service is so utterly opposed to that of Mammon that, if faithful to me you cannot be faithful to him, and he will, in consequence, assuredly take your stewardship of this world's goods from you—that is, sink you in poverty, as I have often said. I counsel you, therefore, so to use the goods of Mammon—the worldly means still at your command—that, by a truly worthy distribution of them to your needy brethren—and my disciples are mostly poor—you may make friends for yourselves, who, if they die before you, will welcome you to everlasting habitations in heaven, when you pass thither, at death. Fit yourselves, by labours of love and deeds of true charity, as my followers, to become fellow-citizens of the heavenly mansions with those whose wants you have relieved while they were still in life.

"If you be faithful, thus, in the use of your possessions

CHAP. LIII.

on earth, you will be deemed worthy by God to be entrusted with infinitely greater riches hereafter, in heaven, for he that is faithful in this lesser stewardship, has shown that he will be so in a higher, but he who has misused the lesser cannot hope to be entrusted with a greater. If you show in your life, that you have not been faithful to God in the use of this world's goods, entrusted to you by Him to administer for His glory, how can you hope that He will commit to your keeping the unspeakably grander trust of heavenly riches? If you have proved unfaithful in the stewardship of what was not yours—the worldly means lent you for a time by God—how can you hope to be honoured with the great trust of eternal salvation, which would have been yours had you proved yourself fit for it?

"Be assured that if you do not use your earthly riches faithfully for God, by dispensing them as I have told you, you will never enter my heavenly Kingdom at all. You will have shown that you are servants of Mammon, and not the servants of God; for it is impossible for any man to serve two masters." [13]

[13] Trench on Parables, 423 f. Meyer, *in loc.* Neander's Life of Christ, 301. Rosenmüller's Scholia, *in loc.* Hess, Leben Jesu, 380 ff. Pressel, Leben Jesu, 274 ff.

Luke 16. 14—31.

Such unworldly counsels, so contrary to their own spirit, were received with contemptuous ridicule [b] by the Pharisees standing round, as the mere dreams of a crazed enthusiast. The love of money had become a characteristic of their decaying religiousness, and it seemed to them the wildest folly to advise the rich, as their truest wisdom, to use their wealth to make friends for the future world, instead of enjoying it here. It is quite possible, indeed, that some of them felt the words of Christ as a personal reproof, and were all the more embittered.

Patient as He was in the endurance of personal wrongs and insults, the indignation of Jesus was roused at such sneers at the first principles of genuine religion, and He, at once, with the calm fearlessness habitual to Him, exposed their hypocrisy and unsafeness as spiritual guides.

"You hold your heads high," said He, "and affect to be saints, before men—such perfect patterns of piety, indeed, that you may judge all men by yourselves.

"But God, who knows all things, and judges, not by the

outward appearance, but by the heart, knows how different you are in reality from what you make men believe. Your pretended holiness, which is so highly thought of by men, is an abomination before God. You ignore, or explain away the commands of His law, when they do not suit you, and thus are mere actors, for true godliness honours the whole Law. I condemn you on the one ground on which you claim to be most secure. You demand honour for your strict obedience to the Law;. I charge you with hypocrisy, for your designed and deliberate corruption of that Law, to suit yourselves.

"Sincerity is demanded from those who wish to serve God. That which Moses and the Prophets so long announced,—that to which all the Scriptures point, the Kingdom of the Messiah—has come. From the time when the Baptist preached, that kingdom is no longer future, but is set up in your midst, and with what success! Every one presses with eagerness into it. But, as you know, I, its Head and King, make the most searching demands from those who would enter it, and open its citizenship only to those who are willing to overcome all difficulties to obtain it. You charge me with breaking the Law, but, so far from doing so, I require that the whole Law, in its truest sense, be obeyed by every one who seeks to enter the New Kingdom. It is easier for heaven and earth, I tell men, to pass away, than for one tittle of the Law to lose its force. But how different is it with you! Take the one single case of divorce. What loose examples does not the conduct of some of your own class supply? what conflicting opinions do you not give on the question? I claim that the words of the Law be observed to the letter, and maintain, in opposition to your hollow morality, that any one who puts away his wife, except for adultery, and marries another, himself commits adultery, and that he who marries the woman thus divorced is also guilty of the same crime. Judge by this whether you or I most honour the Law—whether you or I are the safer guides of the people. How God must despise your boasts of special zeal for His glory!

"But that, notwithstanding your sneers, you may feel the

CHAP. LIII.

14 Luke 16. 19 ff.

15 God (is my) help.

truth of what I have just said as to the results of the possession of riches,[14] when they are not employed as I have counselled—to make friends for yourselves, who will welcome you to heaven hereafter, let me tell you a parable.

"There was a certain rich man who dressed in robes of fine purple—the raiment of princes—over garments of the costliest Egyptian cotton, which only the most luxurious can buy.

"There was also, in the same place, a poor diseased beggar named Lazarus,[15] who had been brought and set down, as an object of charity, before the gates of the great man's mansion, where he lay helpless, day after day; so abject, that he longed to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. But the rich man, though he often saw him, and knew his case, showed him no kindness, and instead of helping the sufferer, and thus making a friend by his money, who should help him hereafter, as I advise; had no thought except of himself, and of his own pleasure. The poor man's case was indeed pitiful; he could not even drive away the unclean dogs, which, day by day, came and increased his pain by licking his sores.

"It came to pass, after a time, that Lazarus died, and was carried by the angels to Paradise, and there set down next to Abraham on the banqueting couches, at the feast in the kingdom of God, with his head in the great patriarch's bosom—the highest place of honour that Paradise could give.

"Erelong, the rich man also died, and, unlike Lazarus, whom men had left uncared for even in his death, he was honoured with a sumptuous funeral.

"He, also, passed to Hades; not, however, to that part of it where Paradise is, but to Gehenna, the place of pain and torment in the world of shades. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham in the far distance, in the banqueting hall of bliss, with Lazarus reclining next him, in his bosom, as his most honoured friend. And he knew them both, and remembered how Lazarus had lain at his gate, and thought of this as a bond between them. 'O

Father Abraham,' cried he, in his torments, 'have mercy on my agony, I beseech thee, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.' So great had been the change in their positions, that now the despised beggar was entreated to do even so small a favour to him from whom he himself had once looked for any favour in vain! Dives would fain make friends with Lazarus now, but could not bethink him of any good deed he had ever done him to help him to do so.



"Abraham now called this to his mind. 'Son,' said he, 'wonder not that you and Lazarus are in such opposite conditions here, from those you had when in life. You, then, had as much earthly happiness as you could enjoy: you had it, and set your heart on it, and lived only for yourself. Had you used your wealth as a godly man, in doing good to those, like Lazarus, who needed pity, instead of lavishing it on splendour and self-indulgence, you would have had good laid up for you now. But you lived only for earth, and the good you chose has been left behind you. You made your portion in your lifetime, and have none here. But Lazarus endured, while still alive, the sufferings allotted him, and he has none in this state. Penitent and lowly, he bore them patiently, as a child of God, and is now receiving the reward of the poor in spirit. His position and yours are reversed, for he now finds consolation and joy, in exchange for his earthly misery, but you, pain and sorrow, instead of your self-indulgence.'

"'Besides all this,' added he, 'between this happy abode and yours, there is a great space, across which no one can pass, either from us to you, or from you to us, so that it is impossible that you should have any share in our joy, or that we can in any way lessen your pain.'

"Now, for the first time, the rich man saw the full extent of his misery, and its cause. 'Would that I had acted differently,' cried he, 'when in life. Would that, instead of living for myself—hard, impenitent, selfish—I had been lowly and penitent, using my wealth as God enjoined, in blessing the wretched. I should then have been welcomed

by Lazarus, and such as he, into the everlasting habitations of Paradise!'

"'But, oh! Father Abraham,' he continued, 'let me be the only one of my father's house to come into this doleful place. Send Lazarus, I beseech thee, back to earth, to my father's house, for I have five brethren, who live as I lived.[c] It would add unspeakably to my pain if they also came to this abode of woe. Oh! let Lazarus go and warn them of what has befallen me, their brother.'

"'To escape your sad doom,' replied Abraham, 'they must needs repent, and live the life of the godly. But for this the Law and the Prophets are the appointed means; let them listen to them.'

"'Nay, Father Abraham,' answered the lost one, 'that is not enough. It did not move me to repentance. But if a dead man returned again from the grave, and came to them, and told them how it was with me here, they would be alarmed, and reform.'

"'You err, my unhappy son,' said Abraham, closing the scene. 'It would not move them in the least, for so amply are the Scriptures fitted to persuade men to repentance, that those whom they do not win to it would not be persuaded even if one rose from the dead.'"

The Rabbis had listened to the parable, but it touched their own failing too pointedly to make them care for any longer conference with Jesus. When they were gone—it may be while He was resting with the Twelve in the cool of the evening—the incidents of the whole day were passed in review, and Jesus noticed that the words and bearing of His opponents, respect for whom, as the teachers of the nation, was instinctive with every Jew—had not been without their effect even on His disciples. It was evident that the very nature of His demands—the trials and persecutions to come, and the weakness of human nature—would raise moral hindrances to the full and abiding loyalty of not a few.

By way of caution, therefore, He now warned them on this point.[16] "It is impossible," said He, "to prevent divisions, disputes, and even desertion and apostasy, on the part of some of you, in the evil times to come. Misrepre-

[16] Luke 17. 1—4.

sentation, prejudice, the bent of different minds; the weakness of some, and the unworthiness of others, will inevitably produce their natural results. The progress of my kingdom will, I foresee, be hindered more or less from this cause, but it cannot be avoided. Yet, woe to him who thus hinders the spread and glory of the Truth. It were better for him, if, like the worst criminal, he were bound to a heavy millstone, and cast into the sea, than that he should cause a single simple child-like soul, who believes in me, to fall. Take heed that you neither mislead nor are misled! Remember that I tell you that offences must be prevented or removed by a lowly forgiving spirit on your part. You know how far you are yet from this; how strong pride, love of your own opinion, harshness, and impatience, still are in your hearts. To further my Kingdom when I am gone, strive above all things for peace and love among yourselves.

"The one grand means of avoiding these causes of offence and spiritual ruin is unwearied, forgiving love; by that frame of mind which you see so wholly wanting in the Rabbis, that they have even now murmured at my so much as speaking to sinners, from whom such simple, lowly brethren are to be gathered. If such an one sin against you, and turn away from your fellowship, rebuke him for his sin, but if he see his error and repent of it, and come back, forgive him; aye, even if he wrong you seven times in a day, and feel and acknowledge his error and promise amendment, as often, you must each time forgive him freely."

The Twelve had listened to these counsels with intense interest, but their moral grandeur almost discouraged them.[17] They felt that nothing is harder than constant patience and loving humility—never returning evil for evil, but ever ready to forgive, even when repeatedly injured without cause. It needed, as they feared, stronger faith than they yet had, to create such an abiding spirit of tender meekness. They had talked over the whole matter, and saw only one source of strength. Coming to their Master, full of confidence in His divine power to grant their request, they openly, and with a sweet humility, prayed Him that He would increase their faith.

17 Luke 17.5—10.

CHAP. LIII.

"This request," answered Jesus, "shows that faith, in a true and worthy sense, is yet to be begun in your hearts. If you had it, even in a small measure, or, to use a phrase you hear every day, as a grain of mustard-seed; instead of finding obedience to these counsels too difficult, you would undertake and perform even apparent impossibilities—acts of trust which demand the highest spiritual power and strength. To use words which you have often heard as an illustration of acts naturally impossible, you would say to this sycamore or mulberry-tree,[18] 'Be thou plucked up by the roots and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you—that is, you would be able to do what, without faith, seems as impossible.[19]

[18] Tristram's Nat. Hist. of Bible, 363.

[19] Rosenmüller, *in loc.*

"To such efficiency and eminence in my service will true faith in Me lead you: but beware, amidst all, of any thought of merit of your own. Your faith must grow, and cannot be given as a mere bounty from without: it is a result of your own spiritual development and true humility, which looks away from self to Me, as the one condition of this advancement. You shall have the increased faith you seek, but it will be only by your continued loving dependence on me, your Master. If any of you had a servant ploughing or tending your flock, would you say to him when he comes home from the field in the evening, 'Come near immediately, and sit down to meat?' Would you not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, and make yourself fit to wait on me at table, and after I have supped, you shall eat and drink?' Would you think yourself under obligation to the servant because he has been working for you, or because he waits on you as required? Assuredly not, for your servant had only done what it was right he should do as a servant. Be, you, such servants. There is a daily work, with prescribed tasks, required from you. The great supper will not be till this life is ended; but when it is ended, you must not think of yourselves, on account of it, except as becomes servants; and should you be rewarded or honoured, you must not forget, that it is only from my free favour, and not as payment of any claim; because, in fact, you have done only what it was your duty, as servants, to do. The servant who does

less than his duty, is guilty before his master, but he who has done his duty, though he has avoided blame, has no reason to think himself entitled to reward. Feel, therefore, in any case, that your work has not been beyond your rightful duty, and that, though you have escaped condemnation, you have no claim for any merit."[20]

[20] Luke 17. 5—11.

The hostility of the Rabbis was growing daily more bitter, after each fruitless attack. At each town or village they gathered round Him, and harassed Him at every step by attempts to compromise Him with the authorities.

On one of these last days of His journey towards Jerusalem, a knot of Pharisees had, thus, forced themselves on Him, and sought to elicit something that might serve them, by asking Him—

"Master, you have often represented yourself, both by word and by mighty deeds, as the Messiah, but we see no signs as yet of the coming of the kingdom of God. When will it come? It has been long promised."[21]

[21] Luke 17. 20—37.

"The kingdom of God," answered Jesus, "is something entirely different from what you expect. You look for a great political revolution, and the establishment of a Jewish empire, with its capital in Jerusalem. Instead of this, it is a spiritual kingdom, in the hearts and consciences of men, and, as such, cannot come with the outward display and circumstance of earthly monarchy, so that men may say, 'Lo, here is the kingdom of God,' or, 'lo, there.' The coming of the kingdom develops itself unobserved. I cannot, therefore, give you any moment when it may be said to have come, for, in fact, it is already in your midst. I, the Messiah, live and work amongst you, and where the Messiah is, there is His kingdom. There, already, is it steadily advancing, after its nature, like the seed in the ground, like the grain of mustard-seed, or, like the leaven in a woman's measure of meal."

The malevolent question thus met a reply which at once balked curiosity, and laid on all the most solemn responsibilities; for if the Messiah was really among them, how imperative to fit themselves for entering His kingdom! The interrogators, finding their sinister effort vain, presently left,

CHAP. LIII. and, when thus alone, Jesus resumed the subject with His disciples.

"I have only spoken to these men," said He, "of the growth and development of my kingdom, unseen, and silently, in the hearts of men. To you I would now speak of the future. Days will come when trouble shall make men's hearts long for one of the days of the Son of Man back again, and false Messiahs will rise, pretending to bring deliverance. But when they say to you, 'Lo, there is the Messiah come at last,' or, 'Lo, here He is,' go not out after them; do not follow them. For the coming of the Son of Man will be as sudden, as striking to all eyes, as mighty in its power, as when the lightning leaps from the cloud and suddenly sets the whole heavens in flame. There is no need of asking of the lightning 'Where is it?' or for any to tell you of it.

"But this coming will not be now. I must first suffer many things from this generation, and be rejected by it. Far from approaching with slow royal pomp, seen and welcomed from afar; far from the world hailing my coming, and preparing for it, as for that of an expected king: they will be busied in their ordinary affairs when it is nearest; till, suddenly, wide ruin and judgment burst on them, as the flood on the men of the days of Noah, and the fire from heaven on Sodom, in the days of Lot, bringing destruction on all. Men lived in security then; they ate and drank; they married and gave in marriage, with no thought or preparation for the impending catastrophe.

"It will be the same at my coming. Men will be as secure; the day will burst on them as suddenly, when I shall be revealed in my glory. When it comes, there will be an awful and instant separation of man from man. The good and evil will no longer be mixed together. He who would save himself must, on the moment, part from those whom the peril threatens. He who lives in a town, must, as the destruction approaches, so hasten his flight, that if he be on the housetop when it draws near, he must not think of going into the house to save anything, but must flee, at the loss of all earthly possessions. He who is in the open field,

must not turn back to his house for his goods, but must leave all behind him, and escape with his life. You hear my words: see that, in that day, you give heed to them. Remember Lot's wife, who perished for looking back, in disobedience to the divine command. Whosoever, in that day, shall seek to preserve his life, by unfaithfulness to me, shall lose life eternal, and he who loses this life for my sake, will secure heaven for ever.

"The separation of men, at my coming, will, indeed, be solemn! Those who spent this life together, will then find themselves parted for ever! I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed; one will be taken, and the other left; two poor slaves will be grinding flour for the household together; one will be taken and the other left."

The Twelve had listened with breathless attention to this vision of the future. They had heard much that was new, grand, and fearful, and they trembled with a natural fear at the awful picture set before them. "Where, Lord," asked they, "will the Messiah gather His own, that they may be safe? Where is the refuge in which those who love Thee will be received in that day?"

"Who says to the eagle," replied Jesus, "where the carcase is? His keen eyes see it from afar. Where the Messiah will be, and where the gathering place for the saved will be, they will see from afar for whom it is provided, and with swift flight will betake themselves thither."

The momentous earnestness with which Jesus had so often spoken of the difficulty of being truly His disciple had sunk into the hearts of many who heard it, and the free access to Himself He permitted, must often have been used to seek counsel on a point so momentous. It was, moreover, a passion with the Jew to speculate on every question of theology, as is seen in the vast system elaborated by the Rabbis. The mysteries of the future world especially engrossed them. By the multitude it was taken for granted that every Israelite, as such, would have a portion in heaven,[22] but there were not a few others who, like Esdras, fancied that "The Most High had made this world for many, but the world to come for few: as He had made

[22] Lightfoot, *in loc.* 2 Esdras 8. 1–3.

CHAP. LIII.

[23] Luke 13. 22—30.

much common earth, but little gold." One in whom His words had raised such questions, took advantage,[23] about this time, of His readiness to listen to their doubts and inquiries, to ask Him if more than a few only would be saved, since He had said it was so hard to be His follower. Instead of answering, directly, a question which could only gratify curiosity, Jesus, ever practical, gave His reply a turn which was much more useful.

"It would benefit you little," said He, "if I answered your question as you wish: the great matter for you is that many will not be saved, so that it becomes you to strive, with intense earnestness, to enter in through the narrow door that leads to eternal life; for many, I say unto you, who would like to enter at last, but do not thus strive now, will seek to do so when too late and will not be admitted.[d] If once you be shut out from the kingdom of the Messiah, you will in vain plead your external connection with me now. When the great banquet of heaven begins, the Messiah will cause the door of the banqueting hall to be shut. If ye, then, come to it and knock at the door, saying 'Lord, open to us,' He will answer from within, 'I know you not, whence you are.' If you urge that He has forgotten you, and that, if He will bethink Him, He will recollect that you ate and drank in His presence, as companions at the same table, and that He had taught in your streets, He will only answer, 'I tell you I know you not, whence ye are. Depart from me, all ye workers of unrighteousness.'

"What weeping and gnashing of teeth will be there as ye stand, thus, and see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast out! What wailing, when you see, instead of yourselves, the heathen you have so despised, come from the east, and west, and north, and south,[24] and sit down at the great feast of heaven. Believe me, there are many who, now, before the setting up of my kingdom, are first, who, after it is set up, will be last; many, like the heathen who shall enter to the feast, who will become my disciples only late, and shall yet take a first place in my kingdom. See that ye press on while the door is still open to admit you."

[24] Luke 13. 22—30.

Jesus had now been for some time in Perea,[25] in the territory of Antipas, the murderer of John. The intense unpopularity of the crime had, doubtless, been a protection to Him, but there were many reasons why such a man should wish the great Wonder Worker, whom he personally feared so much, as, perhaps, the murdered Baptist, risen from the dead, fairly out of his dominions. Unwilling to appear in the matter, he used the Pharisees, counting on their readiness to further his end of getting rid of Him. Some of their number, therefore, came to Him, with the air of friends anxious for His safety, and warned him that it would be well for Him to leave Perea as quickly as possible, as Herod desired to kill Him.

[25] Luke 13 31—35

Jesus at once saw through the whole design, as a crafty plan of Herod himself to expel Him. He was on His way to Jerusalem, and contented Himself with showing that He gave no grounds for political suspicion, and that He quite well understood how little friendship there was in the advice the Pharisees had given Him.

"Go and tell that crafty fox," said He, "that I know why he is afraid of me, and wishes me out of his land. Tell him there is no cause for his alarm, for I do nothing to wake his suspicions. I have no designs that can injure him, but confine myself to driving demons from poor men possessed with them, and to healing the sick. These harmless labours I shall not intermit till the time I have fixed to give to them is over. It will take three days more to pass quite out of Perea, and for these three days I shall be in his territory, but on the third day I leave it, for I am now on my way to Jerusalem, to die there. Herod will not need to trouble himself to kill me, for it would be unfitting for a prophet to die outside the holy city." Such a message was virtually an intimation that He knew that it would be by the hands of those who pretended kindly to warn Him, and their allies, that He should perish, and not by those of Antipas.

The word Jerusalem, and the thought of the guilt of the city so tenderly loved by Him—guilt soon to be increased by His violent death at its hand, filled His heart with deep irrepressible emotion.

"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem," cried He, in a louder voice, trembling with sadness—"it is thou, the City of the Temple, the City of the Great King, who killest the prophets, and stonest those whom God sends unto thee! Thou art still true to thine evil repute! How often, oh, how often, thou mother of many children, would I have gathered them all round me safely, from the dangers before them; as the careful hen calls together her brood when the shadow of evil falls near, and spreads her wings over them, and guards them from every harm! But thou wouldst not let me do thee this service. For what shall come on thee thou must, thyself, bear the blame! The divine protection I would have given thee thou hast refused and hast lost, nor will I appear in thy desolation as thy helper. Thou wilt not see me till I come to set up in thee my Kingdom, and receive thy homage, no longer to be denied,—as the Messiah, the Blessed, who comes in the name of the Lord!"

## CHAPTER LIV.

### IN PEREA—(CONTINUED).



THE lofty demands of Jesus from His followers had filled the Twelve with doubts and misgivings of their power to fulfil them. A continuous self-denial, which thought only of their Master, and a patient love which returned meekness and good for evil and injury, were graces slowly attained; how much more so when they could only strike root in the heart after the dislodgement of hereditary prejudices and modes of thought?

A sense of weakness had already led them to ask that their faith in Jesus as the Messiah; able to aid them in all their straits and trials; might be strengthened. The utterance of that faith in prayer was no less necessary, at once to obtain the grace needed to bear them through difficulties, and to raise them to a steadfast confidence in the triumphant manifestation of their Master's Kingdom, of which He had more than once spoken. Lest they should grow slack in this great duty, He reminded them that their whole frame of mind should be one of habitual devotion, that they might not become faint-hearted, and give way before the trials they might have to suffer, or at the seeming delay in His coming. His words, as usual, took the form of a parable.

"There was in a city," said He, "a judge, who neither feared God nor reverenced man.[1] And there was also a widow in that city who had an enemy from whom she could hope to get free only by the interposition of the judge. So she came often to him, asking him to do justice to her, and maintain her right against her adversary.[2] But he paid no attention, for a long time, to her suit. At last, however, he could bear her constant coming no longer, and said within himself—

[1] Luke 18. 1—8.

[2] Ullmann, 63. Bibel Lex. ii. 341.

CHAP. LIV.

'Though I should do it as my duty, that does not trouble me, for I do not pretend to fear God, and care nothing for man; Yet this widow torments me. I shall therefore do what is right in her case for my own sake, for otherwise she will perfectly weary me by her constant appeals.'[a]

"So, the widow, by her importunity, obtained her end, at last.

"Hear what the unjust judge says! But if men thus get what is right, even from the worst, if they urge their suit long enough, with sufficient earnestness; how can any one doubt that God, the Righteous One, will give heed to the cry of His Saints for all they have to suffer? Will He not much rather, though He let the enemy rage for what seems a long time, surely, at the great day, avenge the wrongs of His elect, who are so dear to Him, and thus cry in prayer night and day?

"I tell you, He will be patient towards them, though they thus cry to Him continually, for He is not wearied with their complaints, as the unjust judge was with those of the widow; and He will deliver them from their enemies, without and within, and give them a portion in the Kingdom of the Messiah, and that speedily. For when the Messiah comes it will seem as if the waiting for Him had only been brief. But when He thus comes, will He find any who still look for Him, and believe that the promise of His return will be fulfilled? Will my disciples endure to the end; or can it be that they will fall away before all their trials?"

To one of these last days in Perea we are indebted for the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. Jesus had spoken much of prayer, but the religion of the day was so largely mechanical, that they were in danger of mistaking the outward form for the substance. Only repeated lessons could guard them from the lifeless formality of the Rabbis, with whom the most sacred duties had sunk to cold outward rites. Self-righteous pride, moreover, was the characteristic of much of the current religiousnesss, and was, in fact, a natural result of the externalism prevailing. To show the true nature of devotion pleasing to God, He related the following parable:—

"Two men," said He, "went up at the same time, the hour of prayer, to the Temple, to pray.[3] The one was a Pharisee, the other a Publican. The Pharisee, who had seen the Publican enter the Temple with him, stood apart; his eyes towards the Holy of Holies, and began to pray thus—'O God, I thank Thee that I do not belong to the common multitude of mankind, whom Thou hast rejected—to the covetous, the unjust, the adulterous. I thank Thee that I am not what so many men are, what this Publican, here before Thee, is. He knows nothing of fasting or of tithes, but I fast every Monday and every Thursday, and I give the Priests and Levites the tenth, not only of all I have, but of all I may gain, which is more than the Law requires.'

"The Publican, meanwhile, feeling that he was a sinner, stopped far behind the Pharisee, coming no further into the sacred court than its very edge; for he shrank from a near approach to God. Nor could he dare, in his lowly penitence, to lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, far less his head and his hands, but, with bent head, smote on his breast in his sorrow, and said—'God be merciful to me the sinner.'[4]

"The Pharisee had offered only a proud, cold thanksgiving for his own merits; the Publican an humble cry for mercy.

"Believe me, this Publican, whom the Pharisee gave a place among the extortionate, the unjust and the impure, received favour from God, and returned to his home forgiven and accepted; but the Pharisee went away unjustified. For, as I have often said, every one who thinks highly of himself in religious things will be humbled before God, and he who humbles himself will be honoured before Him."[5]

Among the questions of the day fiercely debated between the great rival schools of Hillel and Schammai, no one was more so than that of divorce. The school of Hillel contended that a man had a right to divorce his wife for any cause he might assign, if it were no more than his having ceased to love her, or his having seen one he liked better, or her having cooked a dinner badly.[6] The school of Schammai, on the contrary, held that divorce could be issued only for

[3] Luke 18. 9—14 Schenkel's Charakterbild, 196. Schürer, 505. Godwyn, 37. 41, 73. Bibel Lex. ii. 398. Dukes, 181. Keim, ii. 310.

[4] The article makes the expression equal to "The chief of Sinners."

[5] The same sentiment is quoted by Dukes from the Talmud (p. 181), "God exalts him who humbles himself: God humbles him who exalts himself."

[6] Tholuck, Bergpredigt Matt. 5. 31. Hor. Heb. ii. 231. Michaelis' Mos. Recht. ii. 325. Schürer, 509. Bibel Lex. iii. 271. Schleiermacher's Predigten, i. 568. Schenkel's Charakterbild, 202. Newman's Sermons, ii. 247, 131. Hausrath, i. 369. Hillel und Jesus, 27. Godwyn 265

CHAP. LIV.

the crime of adultery, and offences against chastity. If it were possible to get Jesus to pronounce in favour of either school, the hostility of the other would be roused, and, hence, it seemed a favourable chance for compromising Him, to broach this subject for His opinion.

Some of the Pharisees, therefore, took an opportunity of raising the question. "Is it lawful," they asked, "to put away one's wife, when a man thinks fit, for any cause he is pleased to assign? Or, do you think there are exceptions to this rule?"

There could be no doubt that the lofty morality of Jesus would condemn a mere human custom which was corrupting the whole civil and domestic life of the nation, and undermining all honour, chastity, and love. He had already answered the question fully, in the Sermon on the Mount, in which He had taught that arbitrary divorce was not permitted; but that was long since, and He was now in a different part of the country. It was quite in accordance with the habit of the day to appeal to any Rabbi on a disputed religious question, or scruple, on lighter or weightier points; it gratified the universal love for controversy, and gave an opportunity for showing dialectical wit and sharpness. But the questioners gained little by trying their skill on Jesus.

"Have you never read," answered He, "that the Creator of men made man and woman at the same time, in the very beginning of our race, and gave them to each other as husband and wife?[7] And do you not know that so intimate was the relation thus instituted, that, close though the connection be between parents and children, God has said that that between man and wife is so much closer, that a son, who, before, was under his parents, and was bound more closely to them than to any other persons in the world, is to separate himself from his father and mother when he marries, and to form a still nearer relationship with his wife—such a relationship that the two shall become, as it were, one. As soon as a man and woman are married, therefore, the two make, together, only one being. But since it is God who has joined them thus, divorce is the put-

[7] Matt. 19. 3—12. Mark 10. 2—12

ting asunder by man of what God has made into one. Marriage is a sacred union, and man is not to regard it as something which he can undo at his pleasure."

Nothing could be said against this from natural grounds, but the objection lay ready that the Law of Moses was not so strict, and a prospect offered of forcing Jesus either to contradict Himself, or to pronounce openly against the great founder of the nation. "If this be so," said they, "how comes it that Moses permitted a man to divorce his wife? for you know that he says that writings of divorcement might be given where a divorce was wished, and these dissolved the marriage."

"Moses," replied our Lord, "did, indeed, suffer you to put away your wives, to prevent a greater evil. He did so as a statesman and a law-giver, from the necessities of the age, which made any better law impracticable. Our fathers were too rude and headstrong to permit his doing more. But, though he did not prohibit divorce, because the feelings of the times did not allow him to do so, it does not follow from this that his action in this matter was the original law of the Creator, or that conscience and religion sanction such separations. I say, therefore, that whoever puts away his wife, except for fornication, which destroys the very essence of marriage by dissolving the oneness it had formed, and shall marry another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is put away for any other cause commits adultery, because the woman is still, in God's sight, wife of him who has divorced her."

This statement was of far deeper moment than the mere silencing of malignant spies. It was designed to set forth for all ages the law of His New Kingdom in the supreme matter of family life. It swept away for ever from His Society the conception of woman as a mere toy or slave of man, and based true relations of the sexes on the eternal foundation of truth, right, honour, and love. To ennoble the House and the Family by raising woman to her true position was essential to the future stability of His Kingdom, as one of purity and spiritual worth. By making marriage indissoluble He proclaimed the equal rights of woman and

CHAP. LIV.

man within the limits of the family, and, in this, gave their charter of nobility to the mothers of the world. For her nobler position in the Christian era, compared with that granted her in antiquity, woman is indebted to Jesus Christ.

When an opportunity offered, the disciples asked fuller instruction on a matter so grave. Customs or opinions, supported, apparently, by a national law, and that law divine; customs, the rightness of which has never before been doubted, are hard to uproot, however good the grounds on which they are challenged. Hence, even the Twelve felt the strictness of the new law introduced by their Master respecting marriage, and frankly told Him, that if a man were bound to his wife as He had said, it seemed to them better not to marry.

"With respect to marrying or not marrying," replied Christ, "your saying that it is good for a man not to do so is one which cannot be received by all men, but only by those to whom the moral power to act on it has been given by God. Some do not marry from natural causes, and there are some who voluntarily keep in the single state, that they may give themselves with an entire devotion to the service of my Kingdom. Let him among you who feels able to act on the lofty principle of denying himself the nobility and holiness of family life, that he may with more entire devotion consecrate himself to my service, do so." Self-sacrifice, in this, as in all things, was left by Jesus to the conscience and heart. Even His apostles were left free to marry or remain single, as they chose,[8] nor can any depreciation of the married state be wrung from His words, except by a manifest perversion of their spirit.

[8] 1 Cor. 9. 5.

It is significant that, in the South as in Galilee, the mothers of households, though not expressly named, turned with peculiar tenderness and reverence to the new Prophet and Rabbi. They were doubtless encouraged to do so by the sight of the women who now, as always, accompanied Him on His journeys; but the goodness that beamed in His looks, and breathed in His every word, drew them still more. Indifferent to the hard and often worthless disputes and questions which engaged the other sex, they sought only a

blessing on the loved ones of their hearts and homes, contented if Jesus would lay His hands on their infants, and utter over them a word of blessing.

A beautiful custom[9] led parents to bring their children at an early age to the Synagogue, that they might have the prayers and blessings of the elders. "After the father of the child," says the Talmud, "had laid his hands on his child's head, he led him to the elders, one by one, and they also blessed him, and prayed that he might grow up famous in the Law, faithful in marriage, and abundant in good works."[10] Children were thus brought, also, to any Rabbi of special holiness, and hence they had been presented already more than once before Jesus. Now, on this, His last journey, little children were again brought to Him that He might put His hands on them, and pray for a blessing on their future life. To the disciples, however, it seemed only troubling their Master, and they chid the parents for bringing them. But the feeling of Christ to children was very different from theirs. To look into their innocent artless eyes must have been a relief after enduring those of spies and malignant enemies. He Himself had the ideal childlike spirit, and He delighted to see in little ones His own image. Purity, truthfulness, simplicity, sincerity, docility, and loving dependence, shone out on Him from them, and made them at all times His favourite types for His followers. The Apostles needed the lessons their characteristics impressed, and though He had enforced them before, He gladly took every opportunity of repeating them.

"Let the little children come to me," said Jesus, "and do not forbid them, for the Kingdom of Heaven is given only to such as have a childlike spirit and nature like theirs." Instead of being too young for the bestowal of His blessing, He saw in their simplicity and innocence the fond earnest of the character He sought to reproduce in mankind. The citizens of His Kingdom must become like them by change of heart and a lowly spiritual life. Stooping down, therefore, He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them. Even the least incidents were thus ever turned to the highest uses.

[9] Matt. 19. 13—15. Mark 10. 13—16. Luke 18. 15—17. Newman's Sermons, i. 443. Keim, iii. 22. B'bel Lex. ii. 154.

[10] Buxtorf's Syn. Jud. 138.

CHAP. LIV.

The need of this childlike spirit, and the sad results of its absence, must have been brought home to the Apostles by an occurrence in their next day's journey. Starting southwards, on the way to Jerusalem, a young man, whose exemplary character had already made him a ruler of the local synagogue, came running after Him,[11] and, approaching Him with great respect, kneeled before Him, as was usual before a venerated Rabbi.[12] "Teacher," said he, "I shall greatly thank Thee if Thou wilt ease my mind. I have laboured diligently to do good words of all kinds prescribed by the Law, but I do not feel satisfied that I have done enough; so am not sure, after all, that I shall inherit eternal life in the kingdom of the Messiah. Pray, tell me what special good work can I do to secure this."

"Why do you ask me what is right to do?" answered Jesus. "Your question is superfluous, for it answers itself. There is only One Absolute Good—that is, God. The good act respecting which you inquire can be nothing else than perfect obedience to His holy will. If you really would enter into life eternal, you must keep the Commandments given thee by Him."

The young man expected to hear some new and special commands, requiring unwonted pains, and securing correspondingly great merit by faultless obedience. The answer of Jesus was too general to help him in this. He, therefore, asked—What commands He particularly meant.

To his astonishment and mortification, instead of naming some ceremonial injunctions, as the Rabbis would have done, Jesus simply quoted some of the well-known commandments of the Second Table—"Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not bear false witness," "Honour thy father and thy mother," closing the list with the greatest of all—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," which was thus put last as the one by which He intended to bring the young man to the test.

These were only the common duties required of all men, and, as such, had a conventional fulfilment which satisfied human standards. Their scope was very different, how-

[11] Matt. 19. 16—30; 20 1—16. Mark 10. 17—31. Luke 13. 18—30.

[12] Hor. Heb. Mark 10. 17. Keim's Christus, 31, 184, 93. Keim's Jesu von Nazara, iii. 30. Ullmann, 109, 216. Jüd. Handwerkerleben, 80. Rosenmüller, Meyer, Godet, Ewald, Paulus, Lange, De Wette, et al in loc.

ever, in the eyes of Jesus, and this the young man presently felt.

His upright and honest life brought no blush at the enumeration. Without pride, except the secret pride of self-righteousness, and with all reverent docility, he replied:

"I believe I can say that I have strictly kept all these commands.[b] In what respect do I still come short?"

The question itself revealed his spiritual deficiencies. It showed that, however sincere in his efforts after such a life as would secure heaven, he had not risen above the outward service of the letter, and had realized neither the spirit of the commandments as a whole, nor, in particular, the infinite breadth of that which enjoined love to his neighbour. Had he seen this in its true grandeur, it would have hinted a higher moral task than merely legal conceptions of duty had taught him, and have supplied, at the same time, an impulse towards its fulfilment.

Jesus read his heart in a moment, and was won by the guilelessness of his answer and question, and by the evident worth of his character. As He looked at him, so earnest, so humble, so admirable in his life and spirit, He loved him. Could he only stand the testing demand that must now be made, he would pass into the citizenship of the kingdom of God.

"You lack one thing yet," said Jesus, therefore, "if you really wish to be perfect. Had you understood the commands of God in their depth and breadth, you would not have asked if you could do anything more than you had done; their living power in you would have suggested continually fresh duties. When you ask me to tell you what next to do, it shows that you think only of tasks imposed from without, and do not act from a principle in your own soul. If your desire for eternal life be supreme, as it ought to be—go home, sell all that you have, and give what you get for it to the poor, and instead of the earthly riches thus given in charity, you will have treasure in heaven. Then, come to me, be my disciple, and bear your cross after me, as I bear mine."

The demand, great though it seems, was exactly suited to

the particular case. It was a special test in a special instance, though underneath it lay the unconditional self-sacrifice, and self-surrender for Christ, required from all His disciples. It could not fail to bring the young man to a clearer self-knowledge, and thus, to a wholly new conception of what true religion demanded. The only way to lead him to a healthier moral state was to humble him, by a disclosure of weakness hitherto unsuspected. He had fancied himself willing to do whatever could be required: he could now see if he really were so. He had thought he cared for nothing in comparison with gaining heaven: he could now judge for himself if he had not erred.

It might have been hoped that this lofty counsel, the repetition of that which had been so often given to others before, would have roused one so earnest to a noble enthusiasm, before which all lower thoughts would have lost their power. The love he had inspired in Jesus must have shown itself towards him in every look and tone: there must have been every desire to attract and win: none to repel. But the one absolute, constant condition of acceptance demanded from all—supreme, unrestricted devotion to Himself and His cause, and willingness to sacrifice all human ties and possessions, or even life, for His sake, could in no case be lowered. Poor, friendless, outlawed, Jesus abated no jot of his awful claims, loftier than human monarch had ever dreamed of making, on all who sought citizenship in His Kingdom.

The test exacted was fatal, at least for the time. It was precisely that which the young man had least expected, and was a thousand times harder than any legal enforcements; painful and protracted even as those by which the highest grade of ceremonial holiness was attained.[13] Had Jesus invited him to be His disciple without requiring the condition He had so often declared indispensable, there would have been instant, delighted acceptance. But that could not be. He could not say "Be my disciple," till He had secured his supreme devotion.

[13] See vol. I. page 251.

Rich, and already a magistrate—for Church and State with the Jews were identical—the demand staggered and

overwhelmed the young man. A moment's thought, and his broad acres, and social position, which he must give up for ever, if he would follow Jesus, raised a whole army of hindrances and hesitations. The condition imposed had no limitation, but neither had his own question to which it was a reply. He had been touched where weakest, but this was exactly what his repeated request demanded. Why should Jesus have asked less from him than from other disciples? It was, doubtless, harder for a rich than for a poor man to leave all, but there must, in no case, be room for doubt of the entire sincerity of those admitted as disciples, and this could be tested only by their readiness to sacrifice all to become so. It was less, besides, to demand this, as things were, for discipleship would only too surely involve, very soon, not only loss of all earthly goods, but life-long trials, and even death.

But the world got the better in the young man's heart, and he went away sorrowful, at the thought that he was voluntarily excluding himself from the kingdom of the Messiah. Yet, the broad acres: the rich possessions—how could he give them up?

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" said Jesus, as he went away, evidently in great mental distress.[14] "It is easier," continued He, "to use a proverb you often hear, for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."[c]

The words fell with a new and perplexing sound on the ears of the disciples. Like all Jews, they had been accustomed to regard worldly prosperity as a special mark of the favour of God—for their ancient Scriptures seemed always to connect the enjoyment of temporal blessings with obedience to the divine law.[15] They still, moreover, secretly cherished the hope of an earthly kingdom of the Messiah, in which riches would play a great part, and, even apart from all this, if it were hard to enter the kingdom of heaven, except by stooping to absolute poverty, it seemed as if very few could be saved at all.

"Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to

[14] Matt. 19. 23—30. Mark 10. 23—31. Luke 18. 30

[15] Deut. ch. 28

enter into the kingdom of God,"[d] repeated Jesus, seeing their wonder and evident uneasiness. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man, who clings to his riches, to enter into the kingdom of God."

"Who, then, can be saved?" asked some of them.

"With men it is impossible," replied Jesus, fixing His eyes earnestly on them, "but not with God: for with God all things are possible. He can bestow heavenly grace to wean the heart from worldly riches: apart from this, the world will prevail."

Peter, especially, had listened with deep attention to all that had passed, and had been mentally applying it to the case of his fellow disciples and himself. Their minds were still full of the Jewish idea of merit before God, and of a claim to corresponding reward. When Jesus summoned them to follow Him, they had been exactly in the young man's position, though they had not had so much to surrender. They had given up every thing for Him, at His first invitation—their families, houses, occupations, and prospects. However little in themselves, these had been the whole world to them. It seemed only natural, therefore, that they should have a proportion of that treasure which Jesus had promised the young man, if he forsook all for His sake.

In keeping with his natural frank impulsiveness, Peter could not restrain his thoughts, and asked Jesus directly what he and his fellow Apostles would have for their loyalty to Him?

Knowing the honest simplicity of the Twelve, their Master, instead of reproving their boldness, cheered them with words which must have sounded inconceivably grand to Galilæan fishermen.

"Be assured that at the final triumph of my Kingdom, when all things shall be delivered from their present corruption, and restored, through Me and my work, to the glory they had before sin entered the world: when I, the now despised Son of Man, shall come again, seated on the throne of my glory, you who have followed me in my humiliation, will be exalted to kingly dignity, and shall sit, each of you, on his throne, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Yea,

more: every one who gives up his brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, or houses, that he may the more unreservedly spread my Gospel, and honour my name, will be rewarded a hundred fold. Even in this present life he will receive back again richly all he has left: houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children; for he will find among those who believe in me, a compensation for all: he will regard and be allowed freely to use their means as his own, and be welcomed by them with more than brotherly friendship. But, with all this, he will have to bear persecution.[16] In the future world, moreover, he will have a still greater reward, for there he will inherit everlasting life."

[16] Acts 4. 32

"But," added He, by way of warning, "Do not trust to your having been the first to follow me. For the rewards of the kingdom of heaven will be like those given by a householder who had a vineyard, and, needing labourers for it, went out early in the morning to hire them. Having found some, he agreed to give them a denarius a day, and sent them into the vineyard. Going out again about the third hour—nine o'clock—he saw others standing idle in the market-place, and sent them also into the vineyard, making no bargain with them, however, but bidding them trust him that be would give them what was just. He did the same at the sixth and at the ninth hours. Finally, he went out at the eleventh hour, and found still others standing about, and asked why they had stayed there all the day, idle. 'Because no one has hired us,' replied they. 'Go ye also into the vineyard,' said he, 'and you shall receive whatever is right.'

"When the evening was come, the lord of the vineyard bade his overseer call the labourers, and pay them all the same sum—the denarius for which he had agreed with the first. He was, also, to begin with those who came into the vineyard last.

"When they came, therefore, who were hired at the eleventh hour, they received each a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed they should have received more; but they also received each only the same amount. And when they received it, they murmured against the house-

holder, saying—'Those who came in last did only one hour's work, and thou hast made them equal to us, who bore the scorching wind from the desert at sunrise,[17] and the heat of the day.' But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours, and go: I desire to give the same to those who came in last, as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will in my own affairs? Is thine eye evil because I am good?'

[17] Stanley's Apostolic Age, 94.

"The householder thus made the first last, and the last first, because the first had been working for hire, while the others had simply trusted his promise. He who works in my kingdom for the sake of a reward hereafter, may do his work well, but he honours me less than others who trust in me, without thinking of future gain. The spirit in which you labour for me gives your service its value. He who is called late in life, and serves me unselfishly, will stand higher at the great day than he who has served me longer, but with a less noble motive. Many are called to join my kingdom and work in it, but few show themselves by their spirit and zeal especially worthy of honour.[18] If the first find themselves last, it will depend on themselves, for though no one can claim reward as his due in the kingdom of God, yet I give it, of favour, to those first who serve me most purely. He, I repeat, who works most devotedly, without thought of reward, will be first, though, perhaps, last to be called: he will be chosen to honour, while others less zealous and loving, though earlier called, will remain undistinguished."

[18] Newman's Sermons, vi. 313. Godwyn, 81. See Rosenmüller, De Wette, Meyer, Lange, Paulus, and others, *in loc*

Nothing could have been more fitted to check any tendency to self-importance and pride, so natural in men raised to a position so inconceivably above their original station. Nor was there room, henceforth, for any mercenary thoughts, even of future reward, for the discharge of their duty. They could not forget, that, though first to enter the vineyard of the New Kingdom, they were yet, so far, on a footing with all who should follow them, that the spiritual worth of their work, alone determined their ultimate honour. The special reward promised by their Master was a free gift of God, not

the payment of a debt, and depended on their own spirit and zeal.

They were now approaching the end of their journey, for they were near Jericho, at which the road struck directly west to Jerusalem. Nisan, the month of the Passover, had already come, and only a few days more remained of our Saviour's life. Nature was putting on its spring beauty, and throngs of early pilgrims were passing to the holy city. All around was joy and gladness, but, amidst all, a deep gloom hung over the little company of Jesus. Everything on the way—the constant disputes with the Rabbis—the warning about Antipas; the very solemnity of the recent teachings, combined to fill their minds with an undefined terror. They had shrunk from visiting Bethany, because it was near Jerusalem; for they knew that the authorities were on the watch to arrest their Master, and put Him to death. He had had to flee from that village, first to Ephraim, and then, over the Jordan, to Perea, and yet He was, now, deliberately walking into the very jaws of danger. They had marched steadily southwards through the woody highlands of Gilead; had passed the rushing waters of the Jabbok and its tributaries, and had, for a moment, seen, once more, the spot where John had closed his mission. The distant mountains of Machaerus now threw their shadows over their route, and, everywhere, the recollections of the great herald of their Master met them. Mount Nebo, where Moses was buried, and the range of Attaroth, where John's mutilated corpse had been laid to rest, were within sight. Every thing in the associations of the journey was solemn, and they knew their national history too well not to fear that, for Jesus, to enter Jerusalem, would be to share the sad fate of the prophets of old, whom it had received only to murder. It was clear that there could be but one issue, and no less so that He was voluntarily going to His death. The calm resolution with which He thus carried out His purpose awed them; for, so far from showing hesitation, He walked at their head, while they could only follow with excited alarm.

Yet, their ideas were still confused, and the hope that

CHAP. LIV.

things might result very differently, still alternated with their fears. The old dream of an earthly kingdom still clung to them, and they fancied that, though Jesus might expect to be killed in the rising of the nation which He would, perhaps, bring about at the approaching feast, He might be more fortunate, and live to establish a great Messianic monarchy.

To dissipate such an illusion, He had already told them, twice, exactly what was before Him; but to prepare them, if possible, for the shock which the sad realization of His words was so soon to bring, He once more recapitulated, with greater minuteness than ever, what He knew, with divine certainty, awaited His entrance into Jerusalem.

"Behold," said He, "we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death"[19]—they, and no others; for, as heads of the Old Kingdom of God, now corrupt and dying, they had rejected Him—"and they will deliver Him to the Romans, to mock, and scourge, and crucify, but the third day He shall rise again."

[19] Matt. 20. 17—19. Mark 10. 33, 34. Luke 18. 31—34.

How hard it is to uproot strong prepossessions was shown within a few hours. In spite of such repeated warnings, not only the Twelve, but the others who followed Him, did not understand what He meant. It is easy for us to do so, after the event; but to anticipate the explanation thus given must have been well-nigh impossible to minds preoccupied with ideas so radically opposed to it.

The mention of thrones, as in reversion for the Twelve at "the Coming" of their Master in His glory, had neutralized the announcement of His death. His open triumph was expected as very near at hand; His death they did not understand, and could not reconcile with His other statements, for, indeed, they did not wish to do so.

Dreams of ambition, thus kindled, had risen, especially in the minds of James and John, who, with Peter, were the most honoured of the Apostles. They had been in a better social position than most of their brethren, and, with Salome, their mother, had given all they had, freely, to the cause of their Master. Ashamed, themselves, to tell Him

their thoughts, they availed themselves of Salome, whom, perhaps, He might the more readily hear, as older than they; as a woman; perhaps as His mother's sister; and as one who had shown herself, like her sons, His true friend.

She now came, therefore, with them, in secret, and, falling on her knees, as was the custom where reverence was intended, and as was especially due to one whom she regarded as the future great Messianic King—told Him she came to ask a surpassing favour.[20] "What is it?" asked Jesus. "Say," answered she, "that these, my two sons, may sit, like the chief ministers of other kings, on the first step of Thy throne, at Thy feet, on Thy right hand and Thy left, when Thou settest up the Kingdom."

[20] Matt. 20. 20—28. Mark 10. 33—45.

So different, as yet, were the two men from what they were afterwards to become, when they had drunk more deeply of their Master's spirit!

"You do not understand what your request implies," answered Jesus. "The highest place in my Kingdom can only be gained by drinking the cup of sore trial, of which I, myself, shall drink presently, and enduring the same fierce baptism of sorrow and suffering, even to death, in which I am to be plunged. Do you think you are able to bear all that?"

In simple true-heartedness, both answered, at once, that they were.

"You shall, indeed," replied Jesus, "drink of my cup, and be baptized with the same baptism as I, but, in my Kingdom, no honours can be given from mere favour, as in kingdoms of the world. Those only can obtain them whose spiritual greatness has fitted them for them. The way to secure them is only through supreme self-sacrifice for my sake, and they are given by my Father to those only who are thus prepared for them. For such, indeed, they are prepared by Him already."

John and James had striven to hide their selfish and ambitious request, by coming to Jesus when He was alone, but the Ten, as was inevitable, soon heard of it, and were indignant in the extreme at such an unworthy attempt to forestal them in their Master's favour. Their own ambition,

CHAP. LIV.

at best only suppressed, broke out, afresh, in a fierce storm of jealous passion. Such human weakness was sadly out of place at any time, among the followers of the meek and lowly Son of Man, but still more so, now, when He stood almost under the shadow of the cross, and it must have caused Him the keenest sorrow. Calling the whole Twelve, offenders and offended, round Him, therefore, He pointed out how utterly they had misapprehended the nature of His Kingdom, notwithstanding all His teaching through the past years.[21]

[21] Authorities: Schenkel's Bibel. Lex. iii. 259; iv. 121; ii. 152; v. 424. Keim's Christus, 41, 74, 93. Hausrath, i. 319, 383, 390. Schenkel's Charakterbild, 216. Schleiermacher's Predigten, i. 425. Newman's Sermons, iv. 295; ii. 320; i. 165, 455. Melvill's Sermons, ii. 59, *et al*

"You are disputing about precedence in my Kingdom," said He, "as if it were like the kingdoms of the world. Once more, let me tell you that it is wholly different. The kings of the heathen nations around us lord it over their subjects, and their magnates, under them, exercise authority often more imperiously than their chiefs. But it is very different in my Kingdom, and a very different spirit must find place among you, its dignitaries. He who wishes to be great in that Kingdom can only be so by becoming the servant of the others; and he who wishes the very highest rank, can only be so by becoming their slave.[e] You may see that it must be so from my own case, your King and Head—for I, the Son of Man, came not to be ministered unto, as other kings are, but to serve, and to give up even my life as a ransom for many."

The upland pastures of Perea were now behind them, and the road led down to the sunken channel of the Jordan, and the "divine district"[f] of Jericho. This small but rich plain was the most luxuriant spot in Palestine. Sloping gently upwards from the level of the Dead Sea, 1,350 feet under the Mediterranean, to the stern background of the hills of Quarantana, it had the climate of Lower Egypt, and displayed the vegetation of the tropics. Its fig-trees were pre-eminently famous: it was unique in its groves of palms of various kinds: its crops of dates were a proverb: the balsam-plant, which grew principally here, furnished a costly perfume, and was in great repute for healing wounds: maize yielded a double harvest: wheat ripened a whole month earlier than in Galilee, and innumerable bees found a

Paradise in the many aromatic flowers and plants, not a few unknown elsewhere, which filled the air with odours, and the landscape with beauty.

Rising like an amphitheatre from amidst this luxuriant scene, lay Jericho, the chief place east of Jerusalem—at seven or eight miles distance from the Jordan—on swelling slopes, seven hundred feet above the bed of the river, from which its gardens and groves, thickly interspersed with mansions, and covering seventy furlongs from north to south, and twenty from east to west, were divided by a strip of wilderness.[22] The town had had an eventful history. Once the stronghold of the Canaanites, it was still, in the days of Christ, surrounded by towers and castles. Thrax and Taurus, two of them, at the entrance of the city, lay in ruins since the time of Pompey, but the old citadel Dock still stood—dark with the recollection that its heroic builder Simon Maccabæus, and his two sons, had been murdered in its chambers. Kypros, the last fortress built by Herod the Great, who had called it after his mother, rose white in the sun on the south of the town. The palace of the Asmonean kings towered amidst gardens; but it had been deserted by royalty since the evil genius of her house, Alexandra, the mother-in-law of Herod, and mother of Mariamne, had lived in it. The great palace of Herod, in the far-famed groves of palms, had been plundered and burned down in the tumults that followed his death, but in its place a still grander structure, built by Archelaus, had risen amidst still finer gardens, and more copious and delightful streams. A grand theatre and spacious circus, built by Herod, scandalized the Jews, not less by their unholy amusements than by the remembrance that the elders of the nation had been shut up in the latter by the dying tyrant, to be cut down at his death in revenge for the hatred borne him. Nor was the murder of the young Asmonean, Aristobulus, in the great pools which surrounded the old Asmonean palace, forgotten; nor the time when Cleopatra had wrung the rich oasis from the hands of Herod, by her spell over her lover, Antony. A great stone aqueduct of eleven arches brought a copious supply of water to the city, and the Roman military road

[22] Sepp, v. 393

CHAP. LIV.

ran through it. The houses themselves, however, though showy, were not substantial, but were built mostly of sun-dried brick, like those of Egypt; so that now, as in the similar cases of Babylon, Nineveh, or Egypt, after long desolation hardly a trace of them remains.[23]

[23] This description is taken from Winer, Herzog, Smith, Schenkel, Röhr, Hausrath, Keim, and others.

A great multitude accompanied Jesus as He drew near Jericho—pilgrims, on foot, or on asses, or camels; who had come from all the side passes, and cross roads, of Perea and Galilee. They met at this central point to go up to the Passover, at Jerusalem: not a few with an eye to the trade driven so briskly in the holy city at this season, with foreign pilgrims,—as well as for devotion.

Near the gate of the town one of the last miracles of our Lord was performed. All the roads leading to Jerusalem, like the Temple itself, were much frequented at the times of the feasts, by beggars, who reaped a special harvest from the charity of the pilgrims.

Blindness is specially frequent in the East. While in northern Europe there is only one blind in a thousand, in Egypt there is one in every hundred; indeed, very few persons there have their eyes quite healthy. The great changes of temperature at different times of the day, especially between day and night, cause inflammation of the eyes, as well as of other parts, both in Palestine and on the Lower Nile; while neglect and stupid prejudice, refusing or slighting remedies in the earlier stages, lead to blindness in many cases that otherwise might be easily cured.[24]

[24] Bibel Lex., *Art.* "Blindheit."

Among the beggars who had gathered on the sides of the road at Jericho were two who had thus lost their sight: one of whom only, by name Bar-Timæus,[g] for some special reason, is particularly noticed by two of the Gospels, in the incident that followed.[25]

[25] Matt. 20. 29—34. Mark 10. 46—52. Luke 18. 35—43; 19. 1.

They had probably heard of the cure, at Jerusalem, of the man who had been born blind, and learning now from the crowd that the great wonder-worker was passing by, at once appealed to Him as the Son of David—the Messiah—to have mercy on them. The multitude tried in vain to silence them: they only cried the louder. At last, Jesus came near, and, standing still, commanded them to be

brought. In a moment their upper garment, which would have hindered them, was cast aside, and, leaping up, they stood before Him with their artless tale; that they believed He could open their eyes, and they prayed He would do so. A touch sufficed: immediately their eyes received sight again, and they joined in the throng that followed their Healer.

Jericho was a Levitical city, and hence the residence of a great many priests: its position as the centre of an exceptionally productive district, and also of the import and export trade between the two sides of the Jordan, made it, also, a city of publicans. It had much the same place in Southern Palestine as Capernaum—the centre of the trade between the sea-coast and the northern interior, as far as Damascus—held in Galilee. The transit to and fro of so much wealth brought with it proportionate work and harvest for the farmers of the revenue. Hence, a strong force of customs and excise collectors was stationed in it, under a local head, named Zacchæus, whom, in our day, we might call a commissioner of customs. In a system so oppressive and arbitrary as the Roman taxation, the inhabitants must have suffered heavily at the hands of such a complete organization. To be friendly with any of their number was not the way to secure the favour of the people at large.

Zacchæus, especially, was disliked and despised, for, though a Jew, he had grown rich by an infamous profession, and was, in the eyes of his fellow-townsmen, not only an extortioner, but, by his serving the Romans, a traitor to his race, and to their invisible king, Jehovah. His personal character, moreover, seems to have been bad, for he owned to Jesus that he had, at least in some cases, wrung money from his fellow-townsmen by swearing falsely against them before the magistrates.

Jesus had seldom passed that way, and hence His person was little known, though report had spread His name widely. Among others, Zacchæus was anxious to see Him,[26] and, being a little man, he had run before the caravan with which Jesus was entering the town, and had taken his station in one of the ever-green fig-trees—a sycamore—of which

[26] Luke 19 2—28

CHAP LIV

some grew at the wayside, of great size—a few even fifty feet in circumference. They were easy to climb, from their short trunks and wide branches, forking out in all directions.[27]

[27] Tristram, 399.

He had never seen Jesus; but he was not the less known to Him, and must have been astounded when the Great Teacher, as He passed the spot, looked up, and, addressing him by name, told him to make haste and come down, as He intended to be his guest that night.[28] A divine purpose of mercy, as yet known to Jesus alone, had determined this self-invitation. Though all others shunned the chief of the publicans as specially disreputable, he was chosen in loving pity by Jesus, as His host. The word was enough: in an instant he was on the ground, and pressingly welcomed Christ to his hospitality. That he, the hated and despised one, should have been thus favoured, in a moment won his heart, and waked the impulse of a new and better life; but it also raised the hostile feeling of the multitude. Voices on every side were heard murmuring that "He was gone, in defiance of the Law, and of public feeling and patriotic duty, to lodge with the chief publican."

[28] John 1. 39.

They little knew the mighty change His having done so had, in a moment, wrought in a soul hitherto degraded and lost, not less by an ignoble life, than by the social proscription which barred all hope of self-recovery. Christ had completely overcome him, for He had treated him as a man, with respect, and shown him that the way still lay open, even to him, to a new and better future. The two had meanwhile, apparently, reached the court of Zacchæus' house, and the crowd pressed closely round as Jesus was about to enter a dwelling, the threshold of which no respectable Jew would think of crossing. He was braving a harsh public opinion, and incurring the bitterest hatred of the Jewish religious leaders, by openly disregarding the laws of ceremonial defilement, and by treating with respect one whom they denounced as accursed. Zacchæus was overpowered with a sense of the unselfish magnanimity which could prompt such treatment of one who had no claim to it. He would signalize the event by an open and public vow. Standing

before the crowd, therefore, he addressed Christ—"Lord, I feel deeply the honour and loving service you do me, and I hereby vow that I shall give one-half of my goods to the poor, to show how much I thank Thee. And, still more, if, as I lament to think has been the case, I have ever taken any money from any one by false accusation, I promise to repay him four-fold—the highest restitution that even Roman law demands from one guilty of such an offence."

"This day is salvation come to this house," said Jesus, as He heard such words,[29] "for this man—sinner though he be—is, nevertheless, a son of Abraham, and now shows himself humbled and penitent. I came to seek and to save that which was lost, and I rejoice to have won back to the fold of God, a child of Israel, who had wandered so far from Him." He had foreseen the whole incident, by His divine power, and calmly ignored all recognition of caste or class when a human soul was to be won.

[29] Land and Book, 22. Furrer, 184, 151, 66. Bibel Lex. v. 424. Schenkel's Charakterbild, 197. Bibel Lex. iv. 295. Robertson's Sermons, i. 70; ii. 213. Schleiermacher's Predigten, iii. 203. Keim, iii. 47. Hausrath, i. 366.

"Before you leave," He continued, still addressing the crowd in the court-yard, or outside it, "let me tell you a parable. I know what is in your thoughts. You see that I am near Jerusalem, and suppose I shall take advantage of the Passover, when such vast throngs of Jews are in the holy city, to proclaim the kingdom of the Messiah in the way you expect, by insurrection and force. Let me set before you the truth."

With that marvellous power of turning every incident to practical account which marked His teaching, He proceeded to repeat a parable borrowed, in many particulars, from facts in their recent or passing national history.[30] Archelaus had set out for Rome, most likely from Jericho itself, not many years before, to obtain investiture in the kingdom left to him by the will of his father Herod, and the Jews had sent a fruitless embassy after him, to prevent his obtaining it. All the princes of the house of Herod had, indeed, been only vassals of Rome, and had had to go to the imperial city, in each case, to seek their kingdom as a gift from the Roman senate.

[30] Baumgarten, 268. Schürer, 227. Hausrath, i. 361, 163. Keim, iii. 54, 212. Sepp, v. 404. The Commentaries, *in loc.*

"A certain man," said He, "of noble birth, went to a distant country to receive for himself the dignity of king

over his former fellow-citizens, and then to return. Before doing so, he called ten of his servants, from whom, as such, he had the right to expect the utmost care for his interests in his absence. He proposed, in his secret mind, to entrust them with a small responsibility, by their discharge of which he could judge, when he returned, of their fitness and worthiness to be put into positions of greater consideration; for he wished to choose from them his future chief officers.

"In the meantime he gave them, each, only a mina, one hundred drachmæ,[h] and said to them, 'Trade with this, on my account, till I return.' If they proved to be faithful in this small matter, he would be able to advance them to higher trusts.

"It happened, however, that he was so unpopular, that his fellow-citizens, in their hatred of him, sent an embassy after him to the supreme power, complaining against him, and contemptuously declaring that they would not have such a man to rule over them. But their embassy failed, for, in spite of it, he obtained the province, and was appointed their king.

"On his return, after he had thus received the government, he ordered the servants to whom he had given the money to be called before him, that he might know what each had gained by trading. The first came and said, 'Lord, thy mina has gained ten.' 'Well done, good servant,' replied his master, 'because thou wast faithful in a very little, be thou governor of ten cities.' The second came, saying, 'Lord, thy mina has gained five.' 'Be thou governor of five cities,' replied his master. But another came and said, 'Lord, here is thy mina, I have kept it safely tied up in a napkin: you will find it just as I got it. I did not know what to do with it, and I was afraid of thee; for I know you are a hard man in money matters, looking for great profits where you have laid out next to nothing,—taking up, as they say, what you had not put down, and, if needs be, reaping where you had not sown,—making good your loss, if there were any, at his expense who caused it,—and so, to keep myself safe, I thought it best to run no risk one way or other.'

"'I will judge you out of your own mouth, wicked servant,' replied his master; 'You say you knew I was a hard man in money matters, seeking gain where I had laid nothing out to secure it, and reaping where others have sown,—why then did you not at least give my money to some exchanger to use at his table, that thus, on my return, I might have got it back with interest?' Then, turning to the servants standing by, he continued, 'Take from him the mina, and give it him that has ten.' 'He has ten already,' muttered the servants, half afraid. But the king went on in his anger, without heeding them,—'I tell you that to every one who shows his fitness to serve me, by having already increased what I at first gave him, I shall give more; but I shall take away what I first gave, from him, who, by adding nothing to it, has proved his unfitness to use what might be put in his hands.'

"'As to my enemies, who did not wish me to reign over them, bring them hither, and put them to death in my presence.'"

The lessons of the parable could hardly be misunderstood. To the Jewish people, who would not receive Him as the Messiah, they spoke in words of warning alarm; but the Twelve, themselves, heard a solemn caution. They had each, in being selected as an apostle, received a sacred trust, to be used for his Master's interests, till the coming again in glory. Well for him, who, when his Lord returned to judgment, could give a good account of his stewardship; woe to him who had neglected his trust! Though called to the same honour at first as the others, as an apostle, he would be stripped of his rank, and receive no share in the glory and dignities of the Messianic kingdom. As to the Jews who rejected Him, His coming would be the signal for the sorest judgments.

Having finished His brief stay in Jericho, Jesus set out, once more, on His journey of calm, self-sacrificing love, to Jerusalem, going on before the multitude in His grand consciousness of victory beyond thought. Many had already gone up to the Holy City, for not a few needed to be there some time before the feast, to prepare themselves to take part

CHAP. LIV.

in it, by purifications necessary from various causes. Lepers, for example, who were cured, but had not been pronounced clean by the priests,[31] and many others, were in this position. Great numbers, moreover, doubtless went up early, for purposes of trade with the first arrivals of pilgrims from abroad.

[31] Ewald, v. 491.

Meanwhile, all classes alike, in Jerusalem, discussed the probability of Christ's coming to the feast.[32] The excitement among the people was evident, and increased the alarm of the hierarchical party, for how could they withstand Him, if He once gained general popular support? The advice of Caiaphas had, therefore, been accepted as the policy of the party at large, and orders had been issued that He should be arrested at once, when found. It was even required that any one who knew where He was, should report it, with a view to His apprehension.

[32] John 11. 55—57.

In the midst of this commotion, Jesus quietly entered Bethany,[33] on the sixth day before the Passover. It was, however, impossible for Him to remain concealed. The news passed from mouth to mouth, and the street of the village soon became thronged with visitors, who came, not only to see Him, but to see Lazarus also, whom they heard He had raised from the dead. The high priests began to question whether they could not manage to put him, also, to death. The sight of him was winning many disciples to Jesus. They would try.

[33] John 12. 1, 9—11.

# CHAPTER LV.

## PALM SUNDAY.



THE long caravan of pilgrims that had accompanied Jesus up the wild gorge of the Kedron, from Jericho, had been left at Bethany; some pressing on to Jerusalem, others pitching their tents, as fancy pleased them, in the pleasant dell below the village, or on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, where they could feast their eyes with a sight of Jerusalem. It was the eve of the Sabbath, and that night and the next day were sacred. The journey from Jericho had been exhausting. A steep and narrow bridle-path, threading the precipitous defile, had been the only road. It was the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The khan, where the wounded man was sheltered, had been passed half way. Lonely ascents, between bare rocks, with the worst footing, had only been left behind when Bethany and Bethphage,[1] on the eastern spur of the Mount of Olives, came in sight. The journey was over before three in the afternoon, for it was the rule to have three hours of rest before the Sabbath began, at six. In Bethany Jesus was at home. It was the village of Lazarus, and Martha, and Mary. The fifteen miles from Jericho had been a continual climb of over three thousand feet, but He could now rest with His friends, through the Sabbath.[2] Before the next He would be crucified. And He knew it.

This glimpse of sweet rest over—the last He would enjoy before the awful end; the first act in the great tragedy—His triumphal entry into Jerusalem[3]—fitly led the way to the great consummation.

In these last months He had more and more openly assumed the supreme dignity of Messiah. With wise caution

[1] Matt. 21. 1—11, 14—17. Mark 11. 1—11. Luke 19. 29—44. John 12. 16—19.

[2] Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, 9th Nisan (30—31 March).

[3] Saturday sunset to Sunday sunset, 10th Nisan (31st March and 1st April).

CHAP. LV.

He had at first refrained from a sudden proclamation of His office, and had carefully shunned popular excitement even by the publication of His miracles; that His words—which were the true seed of His kingdom—might get time to root themselves, and bear fruit among the people, before the inevitable opposition of the ecclesiastical authorities brought His work to a close. He had never, however, refused the title when given Him, or the honours, from time to time paid Him as the Christ. He had even revealed Himself to the woman of Samaria, to the Apostles, first, on the Sea of Galilee, and afterwards, with impressive solemnity, at Cæsarea Philippi; and, latterly, more than once, to His enemies, as the Head of the New Kingdom of God. But, as yet, He had made no public, or, as it were, official declaration of His claims and rights as the Messiah, and till this was done, there still wanted a formal proclamation of His kingdom before Israel and the world. Till it had been done, moreover, the heads of the moribund theocracy could not be said to have had the choice openly given them, as the representatives of the religious past, to accept Him as the Messiah, or definitely to reject Him.

He had, therefore, determined, with calm deliberation, and consciousness of what it involved, to enter Jerusalem publicly, with such circumstance as would openly announce His claim to be the Messiah. He would also perform specific Messianic acts, in the very citadel of the theocracy, and under the eyes of the haughty, and yet alarmed, hierarchy.[4] He would enter as a king, but, as the Prince of Peace, giving no real pretence for any charge of political design, but clearly, as king only in a spiritual sense. He had no longer any reason to conceal from the authorities whom He really was, and felt Himself to be.

[4] F. C. Baur, 38. Baumgarten, 294.

The companies of pilgrims from the various towns and districts of Palestine, or from Jewish settlements abroad, were wont to make public entries into the city before the great feasts. Such an entry Jesus would make; Himself its central figure. It would be a day of joy and gladness to Himself and to others, as when a king enters on his

kingdom. He would no longer check the popular feeling in His favour. His last entry to the Holy City, at the Feast of Tabernacles, had been designedly secret; but this should be in exact contrast, for He knew that His kingly work was now over, as far as He, Himself, could complete it, and the enthusiasm of willing consecration to death, as His path to eternal triumph, filled Him with a serene and victorious joy. Misconception of His claim would be impossible in honest minds, in the face of facts. Israel should now see Him come openly, as He, who, alone, if they frankly accepted Him, could save them, by leading them as a nation, to true repentance, and a higher spiritual life. He knew, beforehand, that they would not, but His work could not be said to be completely ended till He had given them and their leaders this last public opportunity.

Hitherto He had entered the Holy City on foot; this day He would do so as David and the Judges of Israel were wont—riding on the specially Jewish ass. Nor must we think of Western associations in connection with the name. In the East, the ass is in high esteem. Statelier, livelier, swifter than with us, it vies with the horse in favour. Among the Jews it was equally valued as a beast of burden; for work in the field or at the mill; and for riding. In contrast to the horse, which had been introduced by Solomon, from Egypt, and was used especially for war, it was the symbol of peace.[5] To the Jew it was peculiarly national, for had not Moses led his wife, seated on an ass, to Egypt; had not the Judges ridden on white asses; and was not the ass of Abraham, the friend of God, noted in Scripture? Every Jew, moreover, expected, from the words of one of the prophets, that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem, poor, and riding on an ass.[6] No act could be more perfectly in keeping with the conception of a king of Israel, and no words could express more plainly that that king proclaimed Himself the Messiah.[a]

[5] Ewald's Gesch. ii. 187 340; iv. 414. Stanley's Jewish Ch. i. 94.

[6] Zech. 9. 9. Talmud in Eisenmenger ii. 697.

On the early morning of Sunday, the tenth of Nisan—the Jewish Monday, therefore—Jesus and the Twelve left their hospitable shelter at Bethany, and passed out to the little valley beneath, with its clusters of fig, almond, and olive trees,

CHAP. LV.

soon to burst into leaf; and its ever-green palms. Somewhere near lay the larger village of Bethphage; like Bethany, so close to Jerusalem as to be reckoned, in the Rabbinical law, a part of it. Secret disciples, such as the five hundred who afterwards gathered to one spot in Galilee, and the hundred and twenty who met, after the resurrection,[7] in the upper room in the Holy City, were scattered in many places. At least one such lived in Bethphage. Jesus, therefore, now sent two disciples thither; telling them that, immediately on entering it, they would find a she ass tied, and her colt standing by her. "Loose and bring them to me," said He, "and if any one make a remark, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them at once." His supernatural power had rightly directed them. The ass and its colt were found, and the ready permission of their owner—no doubt a disciple —was obtained at once, for their being taken for His use.[8]

Meanwhile, it had reached Jerusalem that He was about to enter it, and great numbers of the Galilæan pilgrims, proud of Him as a prophet from their own district, forthwith set out to meet and escort Him, cutting fronds, as they came, from the palm-trees that then lined the path,[9] to do Him honour. The disciples showed equal enthusiasm, and it was forthwith caught by the crowds around—for the whole open ground near the city was filled with pilgrims at this season. The former hastily threw their abbas on the back of the colt, to deck it for their Master, and set Him on it, the mother walking at its side; and the latter, not to be behind, spread theirs on the road, or cut off the young sprouts from the trees, and strewed them before Him. So, myrtle twigs and robes had been strewn by their ancestors before Mordecai, when he came forth from the palace of Ahasuerus,[10] and so the Persian army had honoured Xerxes, when about to cross the Hellespont,[11] and so it is still sometimes done in Palestine, as a mark of special honour.[12]

There were three paths over the Mount of Olives—on the north, in the hollow between the two crests of the hill; next, over the summit; and on the south, between the Mount of Olives and the Hill of Offence—still the most frequented and the best. Along this Jesus advanced,

[7] 1 Cor. 15. 6. Acts 1. 15.

[8] Furrer, 147.

[9] Sepp, v. 430. Schleiermacher's Predigten, ii. 5. Bibel Lex. iii. 606.

[10] Targ. Esther 10. 15.

[11] Herod. vii. 54.

[12] Furrer, Wanderungen, 88.

preceded and followed by multitudes, with loud cries of rejoicing, as at the Feast of Tabernacles, when the great Hallel[13] was daily sung in their processions. With the improvisatorial turn of the East, their acclamations took a rhythmical form, which was long sung in the early Church, as the first Christian hymn.[14]

[13] Ps. 113. 1—8.

[14] Ewald, Gesch v. 516.

"Give (Thou) the triumph, (O Jehovah), to the Son of David!
Blessed be the kingdom of our Father David, now to be restored in the name of Jehovah!
Blessed be He that cometh—the King of Israel—in the name of Jehovah!
Our peace and salvation (now coming) are from God above!
Praised be He in the highest heavens (for sending them by Him, the Son of David)!
From the highest heavens, send Thou, now, salvation!"

It was a triumph in wondrous contrast with that of earthly monarchs. No spoils of towns or villages adorned it, no trains of captives destined to slavery or death; the spoil of His sword and His spear were seen only in trophies of healing and love, for the lame whom He had cured ran before, the dumb sang His praises, and the blind, sightless no longer, crowded to gaze on their benefactor. The Pharisees among the multitude in vain tried to silence the acclamations. In their mortification they even turned to Jesus Himself, to ask that He should rebuke those who made them. "No," replied He, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the very stones will cry out."

As they approached the shoulder of the hill, where the road bends downwards to the north, the sparse vegetation of the eastern slope changed, as in a moment, to the rich green of gardens and trees, and Jerusalem in its glory rose before them. It is hard for us to imagine, now, the splendour of the view. The City of God, seated on her hills, shone at the moment in the morning sun. Straight before, stretched the vast white walls and buildings of the Temple, its courts, glittering with gold, rising one above the other; the steep sides of the hill of David crowned with lofty walls; the mighty

CHAP. LV.

castles towering above them; the sumptuous palace of Herod in its green parks, and the picturesque outlines of the streets. Over all rested the spell of a history of two thousand years; of a present which craved salvation in its own perverted way; and the mystic Holy of Holies linked the seen to the invisible. The crusaders, long centuries after, when the only glory left to the Holy City was its wondrous memories, burst out into a loud cry—Jerusalem! Jerusalem! when they first saw it, and the enthusiasm of the Jew could not have been fainter. The shouts and rejoicing rose higher than ever.

The whole scene was overpowering, even to Jesus Himself. He was crossing the ground on which, a generation later, the tenth Roman legion would be encamped,[15] as part of the besieging force destined to lay all the splendour before Him in ashes. Knowing the future as He did, His heart was filled with indescribable sadness, for He was a patriot, and man, though also the Son of God. Looking at the spectacle before Him, and thinking of the contrast a few years would show, tears burst from His eyes, and His disciples heard Him saying—"Would that thou hadst known, thou, Jerusalem, in this, thy day, when I come, who, alone, can bring it—what would give thee peace and safety! But now, thou seest not what only could make them thine—the receiving me as the Messiah! Days will come upon thee, when thine enemies will raise a mount about thee, and compass thee round, and invest thee on every side, and level thee with the ground, and bury thy children under thy ruins, and leave not one stone in thee upon another, because thou knewest not the time when God, through me, offeredst thee salvation!"

[15] Jos. Bell. Jud. v. 2. 3; vi. 2. 8; v. 12. 2.

Sweeping round to the north, the road approached Jerusalem by the bridge over the Kedron; to reach which it had to pass Gethsemane. The myriads of pilgrims on the slopes of Olivet, and the crowd at the eastern wall of the Temple, thus saw the procession winding in slow advance, till it reached the gate, now St. Stephen's, through which Jesus passed into Betheza—the new town—riding up the valley between it and Mount Moriah, through narrow streets, hung

with flags and banners for the feast, and crowded, on the raised sides, and on every roof, and at every window, with eager faces. "Who is this?" passed from lip to lip. "It is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth, in Galilee," shouted back the crowd of northern pilgrims and disciples, glorying in the vindication of the honour of their province before the proud and contemptuous sons of Jerusalem.

Leaving His beast and entering the Temple, which—having ridden—He could do without preparation, except that of removing His sandals, though the crowd with Him, if at such times the rules were enforced, had to stop behind to cleanse their dusty feet, take off their shoes, or sandals, and lay aside their walking staves, before entering a place so holy,—He took possession of it in the name and as the representative of Jehovah its Lord, and closed the wondrous day by a calm and prolonged survey of all around. Earnest, sad, indignant hours thus passed; but even they were filled with works of pitying goodness, for the blind and the lame had heard of His coming, and hastened to Him, and were healed. The courts and halls of the Sacred House—the very stronghold of His enemies, re-echoed—to their intense mortification, with the shouts that had accompanied His entry to the city, for the miracles He wrought heightened and prolonged the enthusiasm till the very children joined in the cry of "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Do you see how powerless we are against Him?" muttered the Pharisees; "the whole people have gone after Him."

His bold appearance in the Temple itself, especially filled the priestly dignitaries and Rabbis with indignation, all the deeper because they dared not arrest Him for fear of the crowds, even when now in their very hand. That the children should hail Him as the Messiah, also enraged them. "Hearest thou not what these say?" asked some of them. But, instead of disavowing the supreme honour ascribed to Him, He only replied that He did—"but," added He, "have ye never read in your own Scriptures—'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, Thou (Jehovah) hast perfected praise,[16] that Thou mightest put to shame Thine enemies, and silence Thy foes, and those who rage against Thee.'"[b]

[16] Ps. 8. 2

Never was His presence of mind and quick aptness of retort shown more strikingly.

The day was now far spent. The end proposed had been abundantly attained. The crowds had begun to retire, after evening prayers, and He, too, with the Twelve, passed out quietly with the throng, and betook Himself once more to the well-loved cottage at Bethany.

It had been no chance coincidence that the day in which He had thus virtually consecrated Himself to death, was that on which the paschal lamb was selected.

It is easy to understand the statement of the Gospels, that neither the Twelve nor the disciples at large realized at first the full significance of what had happened. In later times, however, after He had risen and ascended to heaven, its full grandeur gradually broke on them as they discoursed again and again on the whole strange history through which they had passed. They remembered, then, the words of the prophet Zechariah, and saw how the triumphal entry in which they had taken part, had been the divinely designed fulfilment of ancient prophecy.[17]

[17] Zech. 9. 9.

The entry on Palm Sunday, though, for the moment, a bitter mortification to the hierarchical party, was presently hailed by them as a fancied mistake on the part of Jesus. Till now, all their efforts to frame any capital charge against Him, on plausible grounds, had utterly failed. He had slighted the Rabbinical laws, but the Romans, with whom lay the power of life and death, would take no cognizance of such offences. His public entry into Jerusalem, as the Messiah, amidst the shouts of the people, seemed to give them, at last, the means of indicting Him for what they could represent as at least constructive treason—the claiming to be king instead of Cæsar. The Romans dreaded nothing more than assumption of the Messiahship, for it had often cost them dear to quell the insurrections to which it led, and they were stern to the uttermost against any attempt to challenge the Emperor's authority. But the absolutely peaceful bearing of Jesus, throughout: His studied care to make no illegal use of the popular enthusiasm: the quiet dispersion of the crowds, and the utter absence of any poli-

tical character in His whole life and words, were fatal to judicial action, based on grounds so slender. They would not, however, let such a charge against Him slip, and could accuse Him to Pilate, if other charges failed, of "perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that He, Himself, is Christ, a king."[18]

[18] Luke 23. 2.

Morning[19] saw Jesus once more on His way to the Temple. He had not as yet eaten, for He, apparently, looked forward to doing so at the home of some disciple in Jerusalem, and the keen air of the early hours made Him hungry.[20] The little valley of Bethany was famous for dates and figs, for the very name Bethany means—"the place for dates;" while Bethphage[c] is "the place for the green or winter fig"—a variety which remains on the trees through the winter, having ripened only after the leaves had fallen.

[19] 11th Nisan, Sunday sunset to Monday sunset (1st and 2nd April).

[20] Sunrise on Monday morning, 5.49 a.m.

It was not yet the time of the fig harvest,[21] but some of last year's fruit might, no doubt, be found on some of the trees growing about. One tree, especially, attracted the notice of Jesus. It grew at the road-side, as common property, and, even thus early, when other fig-trees had scarcely begun to show greenness, was conspicuous by its young leaves.[22] When He came to it, however, they proved its only boast: there was no fruit of the year before, as might have been naturally expected. It was, indeed, the very type of a fair profession without performance: of the hypocrisy which has only leaves, and no fruit. Such a realized parable could not be passed in silence by One who drew a moral from every incident of life and nature. "Picture of boastful insincerity;" said He, loud enough for the disciples to hear—"type of Israel and its leaders: pretentious, but bearing no fruit to God—let no fruit grow on thee henceforward, for ever," and passed on. They were to learn that profession, without performance, found no favour with their Master.

[21] Matt. 21. 18, 19. Mark 11. 12—14.

[22] Schenkel's Charakterbild, 191.

Reaching the city, He once more went to the Temple,[23] as His Father's house. Two years before, He had purified its outer court from the sordid abuses which love of gain had dexterously cloaked under an affectation of piously serving the requirements of worship. Since then, they had been restored in all their hatefulness. The lowing of oxen,

[23] Matt. 21. 12, 13 Mark 11. 15—19. Luke 19. 45—48.

the bleating of sheep, the cries of the money-changers, and the noisy market chaffering of buyers and sellers of doves or other accessories to a ceremonial worship, filled the air with discordant sounds of the outside world, which had no right in these sacred precincts. The scene roused the same deep indignation in Jesus, as when He formerly rose in His grand protest against it. He had now, in His triumphal entry, formally proclaimed His Kingdom, and would, forthwith, vindicate its rights, by once more restoring the Temple to its becoming purity, for while it stood, it should be holy. The same fervent zeal again dismayed and paralyzed opposition. Filled, as all minds were, with the awe of the popular enthusiasm in His behalf, His command sufficed to clear the spacious court of its motley crowd: the sellers of doves, at His order, bore off their cages: the exchangers gathered up their coin, and He made the one remove their benches and counters, and overturned the empty booths of the others. Nor would He suffer the desecration of laden porters and others seeking to shorten their journeys by crossing the Temple spaces, as if they were public streets. They might carry them round by what way they chose, but must not make a thoroughfare of the sacred courts.[24] "Jehovah has written," said He, "My house is the house of prayer for all nations, but ye, bringing in all the wiles and cheats of unworthy traffic, have made it a den of thieves."

[24] Jost, i. 140. Jüd. Handwerkerleben, 25. Schleiermacher, i. 437. Furrer, 172. Schenkel, Charakterbild, 228.

We cannot suppose that Jesus, within a few hours of His death at the hands of the Temple authorities, and immediately after His lament over His rejection by them and the nation, intended, by this cleansing of the outer Temple spaces, to present Himself as a reformer of the Temple service. He meant, rather, to show, among other things, to the multitudes round Him, by an act which they could not mistake; that the Holy House was already desecrated by the sanctioned intrusion of the spirit of common gain, and made no more than a huge bazaar, with all its abuses; doubly unworthy in such a place. He wished to teach them by the sight of such insensibility to the ideal of a Temple of God, that the fall of the theocracy, with its scoffing high priests, and worn-out ceremonial, was a fact already begun. The

very texts He had quoted [25] were from lamentations over the religious decay of the nation, which, the prophets predicted, would bring the stranger into the House of Jehovah, as more worthy than the Jew; a decay which demanded, instead of mere outward service, a reform of the heart and life. But the great lesson, also, was not wanting, that the worship of God must be pure and earnest, not merely formal, and that hypocrisy was abhorrent to Him. This truth sank that day into all hearts, and before a generation had passed, it had been repeated from the Euphrates to Rome. It was the knell of the Jewish economy at its centre, for a Temple thus publicly marked as given over to greed and gain, under pretence of zeal for religion, was doomed to perish, as all hypocrisies must, in the end.

[25] Isaiah 56. 7. Jer. 7. 2 ff.

The significance of such an act to Himself, was known to none better than to Jesus. He knew that His hour had come, and that He would perish, a martyr to the spirit of a living, as opposed to the letter of a worn-out, faith. He knew that He had against Him the vast power of great vested interests, who passed off their selfish aims as zeal for Church and State, and thus won support from unthinking thousands. He knew, moreover, that the religious revolution He had begun was spreading daily, and must be crushed by His opponents, by any measures that promised success, if their own authority were to stand. But, in the face of all this, He went forward with calm serenity towards death, as the one purchase price of liberty and life for the souls of men.

The day, which had begun with the symbolic cleansing of the Temple, was devoted, in its later hours, to His wonted work of teaching all who would listen, but none of the discourses have been preserved. The people, thronging the Court where He sat—for He taught in the Temple—were greatly impressed by His words; so new, so earnest, so searching and practical, compared with the vapidities of the Rabbis. It was vain for the Jewish authorities to attempt to arrest Him, while He was thus in favour, for all the people rallied to hear Him, and no one knew how far they might be disposed, with their fiery Eastern natures, to rise on His behalf, if He were seized.

CHAP. LV.

This day, therefore, passed as safely for Him as the last, and in the evening Bethany once more received Him. He had entered the city with loud jubilees, but the last mortal struggle, begun by His lofty bearing and independence, made it wise to retire unnoticed. Leaving, therefore, privately, by the flight of steps to the Kedron, He crossed Olivet, only with His disciples.

The sensation caused by the great act of the day must have been profound.[26] The religious instinct of the masses felt that it was worthy of a true prophet of God, but the Temple officials realized only the public censure it implied, on their own estimate and discharge of their duties. For the moment they were paralyzed and helpless; rebuked before all, and boldly condemned by the strange intruder, in exactly the point on which they were most sensitive, for it was as watchful guardians of the Temple they claimed especially the respect of the nation.

Next morning[27] found Him once more on the way to the Temple. "Rabbi," exclaimed Peter, in wonder, as they passed the tree on which Jesus had sought figs the day before—"The fig-tree which Thou cursedst is withered away." It had, indeed, already shrivelled up.

The question gave another opportunity for impressing on the Twelve a truth, which, above all others, He had sought to fix in their hearts during His three years' intercourse with them—that, as His apostles, commissioned to establish and spread His Kingdom, they would be able, if they had an unwavering faith in God and in Him, to overcome all difficulties, however apparently insuperable.

"See," replied He, "that you learn from this tree to have firm trust in God. Believe me, if you have such faith, and let no doubt or wavering enfeeble it; you will be able to do not only such things, hereafter, as you have seen done to this tree, but, to use the expression you so often hear from the Rabbis, when they intend to speak of overcoming the greatest difficulties, or achieving the most unlikely ends—you will be able, as it were, to bid this mountain rise, and cast itself into the sea. All depends, however, on your faith being simple and undoubting, for anything less dishonours God.

[26] Matt. 21. 20—32. Mark 11. 20—33. Luke 20. 1—8; 21. 37, 38.

[27] 12th Nisan, Monday sunset to Tuesday sunset. (April 2—3.)

He who has such child-like trust in Him, may confidently expect his prayers to be heard. When you pray, believe that prayer is, in very deed, answered, and your faith will be honoured by God granting what you seek, for, as His children, and my disciples, you will ask only what is in accordance with His will. Only, you must ever, in your prayers, be in that frame of loving tenderness to your fellow-men, which true faith in God, as His sons, always brings with it. Strife and division destroy your spiritual life, and weaken that faith by which, alone, you can do great things. As you stand at your prayers, as your manner is, you must have no anger, no revenge in your hearts, else you will not be heard. The spirit of frank forgiveness, which springs from true love to God, must, beforehand, have forgiven all who have injured you. For how can you hope that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins against Him, if you do not forgive offences against yourselves?"[28]

[28] Ullmann, 133. Bibel Lex. ii. 423. Keim, ii. 607—610.

But the moments were precious, for His hours were numbered. Always, from the first, intensely energetic, He was now, if possible, more so than ever, that He might utilize every instant for His great purpose. With calm undismayed resolution, each morning saw Him in the Temple, as soon as it was opened. He would show that He was no Jacobin, no revolutionist. Had He been so, how easily might He have taken advantage of the popular enthusiasm, at His entry to the city, or at His cleansing of the Temple Courts. Instead of doing so, He would proclaim the true nature of His Kingdom, by the one means He employed to establish it—the power of persuasion. He would devote His last hours, as He had all His public life, to teaching. By His words alone would He prevail, for they had the irresistible and deathless force of truth, and, as such, would found in every heart whose convictions they reached, a kingdom that must spread, and could never perish.

Meanwhile, His enemies, irresolute what course to pursue to strike Him down; determined to do so but afraid of the popular feeling they might invoke in His favour; watched every opportunity to facilitate decisive action. Their bearing had acquitted Him of all further responsibility towards

CHAP. LV.

them. He had brought the truth home to them in their central stronghold; had made it unmistakable what He demanded in the name of His Father;—that they should begin the reform and salvation of the nation, by reforming themselves its leaders; that they should be true shepherds, and not hirelings; sincere in their religion, and not actors. Such demands, in themselves, proved His Messiahship, for they bore on their front the evidence that they were from God, and, if accepted, He also must be, who had thus been sent from God to proclaim them. The internal evidence of His acts and words thus established His highest claims, for truth and goodness are their own witness, in the universal conscience. But the hierarchy had shown themselves incapable of reform. Like the barren fig-tree, they bore only leaves, and must be left to the righteous indignation of God.

He had not been long instructing the people, who flocked to see and hear Him,[29] before some of the Temple authorities came to Him, determined to bring Him to account for His act of the day before, which had been an intrusion on their duties as Temple-inspectors; and for His assuming to teach as a Rabbi, without any licence from the schools,[30] which was contrary to established rule. They seem to have been a deputation sent officially, and consisted of some of the higher priests—heads of the different courses—some Rabbis, and some of the "elders"—the ancient senators or representatives of the people—who, as a body, had existed through all political changes, from the days of Moses.[31] Interrupting Jesus as He taught, they now abruptly asked Him by what authority He acted as He had done, and was doing.

They, doubtless, hoped that He would claim divine authority, and that they, thus, might have ground for a charge against them. But He was not to be snared. He showed Himself the dreaded, prompt, keen disputant, ready to turn defence into attack. Careful to avoid giving any handle for misrepresentation, instead of answering their question, He evaded it, by asking one in His turn. "Before I answer your question," said He, "let me ask you—Did John the Baptist, in his great work, act in obedience to

[29] Luke 21. 38.

[30] Matt. 21. 23 ff. Mark 11. 27 ff. Luke 20. 1 ff.

[31] Michaelis' Mosaisches Recht. i. 263.

God, as one sent by Him, or was he unauthorized?" To be themselves put to the question; to be forced to give a reply, instead of listening to one, was sufficiently embarrassing, but the question itself was still more so. It involved much. Jesus evidently associated Himself with John as He had never before done. He implied that the man who had been the terror of Pharisees and priests, and their victim—the man of the people, who had roused such an unprecedented excitement,—was His Forerunner and Herald. He spoke of John's baptism as a commission from God, and evidently claimed that His own entry to Jerusalem, His preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven, His cleansing the Temple, and His claim to be the Messiah, were no less by divine authority.

He, Himself, might say all this if He pleased, but, that they should have to say it, was to force them to become His advocates and apologists. Yet, what could they do, for was it not clear to all men not blind to the truth, that John was no mere adventurer, but a noble servant of God? But to own that he was so, would only bring down on themselves the crushing question, "Why then did ye not believe what he said respecting yourselves, and what he said of Me? for his witness, alone, is enough to prove that I come from God." On the other hand, to denounce him as an impostor was dangerous, for his memory was cherished by the people at large, as that of a national hero, the last of the mighty line of prophets. To avoid so disastrous a dilemma, therefore, they were driven to the feeble evasion—that they could not tell whether John's mission was from God or not.

"If so," replied Jesus, "then clearly he did not need your authority, since you never thought it worth while to sanction, or even decide respecting him, and you can have no claim to authorize me, or to withhold authority from me. I, myself, decline, therefore, to tell by what authority I act; if it was indifferent in the case of John, it is equally so in mine."

He had silenced His opponents, but would not let them leave without once more trying to open their eyes to their false position.[32]

[32] Matt. 21. 28—32.

"Let me tell you a parable," He continued. "A certain man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work to-day in the vineyard.' But he answered, 'I will not;' yet, afterwards, he repented and went. And he came to the second son, who, on receiving the same command, at once answered,—'Yes, Sir.' But he did not go. Let me ask you, which of the two do you think, did the will of his father?"

The perfect composure and the consummate art, with which He addressed them, were equally perplexing; for high dignitaries of the Jewish religious world must have been little accustomed to be put in such a position before the multitude. But an answer could not be refused, and the question was framed in such a way, that they could give none but the one which Jesus required for His complete justification, and their own condemnation. Hardly seeing what it implied, they readily answered,—"The first." They were now in His hands. "You say rightly," replied He, "for when John came calling you, in the name of God,—you priests, scribes, and elders,—to repentance and righteousness, you honoured him by ready professions, and smooth compliance, promising all good works of a pious and holy life, and yet you held aloof after all, and showed, by your neglect to obey him, that you disbelieved his message. You are the second son, who said yes, but did not go into the vineyard."

"On the other hand, the publicans and harlots whom you despise, the common people at large, whom you reckon cursed of God; who had roughly and wickedly refused to do right, and had even gone to the utmost in sin, repented at the summons of John, believing his words, and sought earnestly to enter into the Kingdom of God. They, therefore, condemn you, O ye leaders of the people, for, by your own showing, they have done the will of their Father in Heaven, but you have not."

"It has, indeed, been always the same. As, in John's day, ye would not hear him, and in the end persecuted him to the death, so have you and your fathers done in all generations. You, indeed, are worse than they all, for you seek to do even worse. Hear another parable."

He had spoken of the call of God by the mouth of John, and by implication affirmed that His own experience, as the successor of the Baptist in his great work, had been the same. He now glanced at the history of the theocracy, and at the sins of their party, from its earliest days. He recounted the long roll of the servants of God whom they had persecuted and misused, from the first to the last, now no longer John, but a far greater—Himself. In doing so, He now first openly, before them, called Himself the Son of God, and left them to feel that He now stood as such in their presence, awaiting the fate of other messengers of His Father at their hands.

"A certain man," said He, adopting a parable of Isaiah's, "planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and hewed out a wine-cistern in the hill-side, into which to press the wine, and built a tower for the watchers, to guard the vineyard, and agreed with husbandmen to work it on his behalf, and went into a far country, for a long time. And when the fruit season drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive for him his fruits.[33] But they took them, and beat one and killed another, and stoned a third. He then sent other servants, more numerous than the first; but the husbandmen treated them as badly, for they beat one, cast stones at another, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away, not only empty-handed, but shamefully treated. Some of the rest they beat, others they killed, and they refused to pay the fruits they owed.

[33] Isaiah 5. 1 ff; 3. 14; 9. 10. Matt. 21. 33—46 Mark 12. 1—12 Luke 20. 9—19

"Having yet, therefore, a son,—his only and well-beloved,—he determined to send him to them, thinking that, though they had treated his servants so badly, they would be sure to show his son respect. But instead of this, when they saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the son, come let us kill him, and the vineyard, which he should have inherited, will be ours.' So they took him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

"Let me ask you now, what will the lord of the vineyard do to these husbandmen?"

The dignitaries thus addressed could not, in the presence of the crowd listening to all that had passed, refuse the only

CHAP. LV.

possible answer: "He will come and miserably destroy these wretched men," said their spokesman, "and give the vineyard to others, who will render him his fruits in their seasons." The meaning of the parable had already flashed on the minds of some of them, and the answer was followed by a deep "God forbid!" from several voices.

Looking full and steadilly at them, Jesus now kept them from retiring by a further question.

"Did you never read in the Scriptures," said He, "this text, 'The stone which the builders rejected is made the chief corner-stone—the main foundation; Jehovah hath done this; marvellous is it in our eyes?'"[34]

[34] Ps. 118. 22.

The meaning was clear. The corner-stone of the Kingdom of God, of which those in His presence claimed to be the chief men, was, in their own mode of speech, only a figurative name for the Messiah, on whom its existence and completion depended, as a building depends on its foundation and support. The Psalm quoted had been sung, it is believed, by Israel, on the first Feast of Tabernacles, after the return from captivity.[35] Its historical reference was primarily to the Jewish nation—rejected by the heathen, but chosen again by God as the foundation of His earthly kingdom; but, in a higher spiritual sense, the Rabbis themselves understood it of the Messiah, and thus there could be no doubt in the mind of any Jew that when now applied by Christ to Himself, it was a direct claim of Messianic dignity.

[35] Ewald, *in loc.*

"You know this verse, do you not?" continued Jesus: "Well, then—because the stone which you have rejected has been chosen by God as the foundation-stone of His New Spiritual Kingdom, every one who shall fall on it[36]—that is, every one who, by rejecting me, the Messiah, shall have drawn down on himself destruction—will perish; but he on whom it will fall—he, I mean, on whom I, the Messiah, will let loose my avenging judgments, for his rejection of me—will be crushed to pieces, small as the dust or chaff that is scattered to the winds.[d]

[36] Schoettgen, quoted in Meyer. Matt. 21. 22.

"Therefore, I say to you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from Israel, and from you, its present heads, and

be given to a nation who will render to God the fruits He has a right to claim from it."

The guilty consciences of the chief priests and Pharisees addressed, felt, instinctively, that in these parables He had pointed to them. The vineyard of God, separated from the wilderness of heathenism was, clearly, Israel. The Jews had been favoured by having the "noble vine" of divine institutions among them. The tower which protected them, was the Temple of God; the husbandmen were the successors of Moses; the Priests, Rabbis, and Pharisees, the representatives of God, to whom of old He had left His vineyard when He returned to heaven from Mount Sinai; with the charge to tend it, and to render Him duly its fruits. The servants sent were, clearly, the prophets, from their first appearance, in the distant past, to John the Baptist. They had been despised, beaten, martyred. Only One could follow them—the last and highest representative of God, who should have commanded respect even from murderers—His only and well-beloved Son, the Messiah, who had come, not as the nation fancied, to bring them political glory and earthly prosperity, but to receive and bear to His Father the fruits which, kept back for hundreds of years, could no longer be left unrendered. But Jesus, the Messiah, had long foreseen His fate. He had had it before His eyes every hour since His public entry to Jerusalem. He, the rightful heir of the vineyard, had been received by the husbandmen with jealous eyes and deadly purposes. The revolt He had come to end had grown rampant. It had risen from a refusal to render the fruits, to a rejection of their dependence, and a daring resolution to take the vineyard into their own hands: to cast out God, in casting out Him whom He had sent. The fierce anger of God could not long delay. The rebels, smitten by His wrath, must perish. The vineyard must pass into other hands. But "the others" could only be the heathen, whom Israel despised. Loyal to the Son, whom Israel had rejected and slain; His disciples and followers, gathered from other nations, would be entrusted with the inheritance. Changing the figure, these would willingly accept, as the foundation

CHAP. LV.

and chief corner-stone of the New Kingdom of God, Him whom the first builders—of whom those now before Him were the representatives—had rejected. Was there any doubt that God would transfer that kingdom to those thus loyal to His Son? He, who now stood before them, and who at any moment might be cast out of the Temple with ignominy, and slain, must be the foundation of the New Theocracy which was to supplant the Old![37]

[37] Keim, iii. 117.

The first open attempt at violence followed this parable. The hierarchical party felt that they were meant, and that Jesus had dared to call Himself the chief corner-stone of the future Kingdom of God, which was to rise in the place of that with which all their dignities and interests were bound up. With wild Eastern frenzy, they sought to arrest Him on the spot. But as looks and words, passing among them, betrayed their intention to the crowds around, these would not let Him be taken, counting Him, if not the Messiah, at least a prophet. Some, bolder than the rest, possibly laid hands on Him, but they were forced by the surging multitude to let go. They had to leave the place, and suffer Jesus to escape for the moment. But they had power, and organization, and the people would not always be round Him!

Left in peace, the unwearying Divine Man once more calmly betook Himself to His task of teaching all who would hear.

The die had finally been cast, and the open breach between Him and the Church authorities had been proclaimed by Himself in his last parables. Full of lofty indignation at the hypocrisy and wilful blindness of His adversaries, no less than of compassion for the multitude, He could not repress the crowding thoughts which the last hours raised in His soul, and, as usual, they found expression in additional parables.

"The Kingdom of Heaven," He began, "is like a king who made a marriage-feast for his son,[38] and sent forth his servants, as the custom is, to tell those who had already been invited that the time had now come. But, though thus once and again summoned, they would not come. Yet, the

[38] Matt. 22. 1—14.

king, unwilling, in his goodness, that they should not enjoy the feast; in spite of this, sent, once more, other servants to invite them again. 'Come,' ran his message, 'for I have prepared the first meal of the feast; my oxen and fatlings have been killed, and all things are ready: come to the marriage.' But they made light of this fresh invitation as well, and went off, one to his farm, another to his merchandise, while still others took his servants, and ill-treated, and even killed them. Then the king was angry, and sent his soldiers, and destroyed these murderers, and burned their city. Meanwhile, he said to his servants, 'The marriage feast is ready, but those who have been called were not worthy. Go, therefore, to the highways, where the roads cross, and there are most passers-by, and invite to the feast as many as ye find.'

"So the servants went forth from the palace of the king to the roads and cross-ways, and gathered together all, both evil and good, who were willing to accept their invitations, and the feast-chamber was filled with guests.

"The king had made all preparations for the guests being nobly arrayed in festal robes, so as to be worthy to appear before him.[39]

"But, now, when he came in to see the guests, he saw among them a man who had not put on a marriage robe. And he said to him, 'Friend, how is it that you have come in hither without a marriage garment? You must needs have known that I provided robes, fit for my presence, for all my guests, and, not less, how great a slight and disrespect it is to refuse what is thus offered; you know that to do so is to raise the severest indignation in a king thus offended.'[40]

"But the man was speechless, for he could not excuse himself.

"Then said the king to his attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him out into the thick darkness outside.'"

"Ye know," added Jesus, "how dark in the night our streets are, in which no windows open, and which no lights illumine. That darkness is but a type of the awful night into which he will be cast out, who appears at the marriage

[39] Nork, 88. Rabbinical Parable from Koheleth Rabba, 9. 8.

[40] Rosenmüller Scholia. Matt. 22. 11.

feast of the Messiah's kingdom, without the marriage-robe provided by my Father. In that darkness there will, indeed, be weeping and gnashing of teeth, for though multitudes are invited to the feast of the heavenly kingdom, many neglect to secure the marriage-robe, without which no one can see the king!"

The parable was an enforcement of those just addressed to the priests and Rabbis, but with various additional lessons. The haughty sons of Jerusalem heard once more, that when the kingdom of the Messiah should be set up in its glory, God would call the heathen to a share in it, while the people of Israel, with their religious leaders—because, as a nation, they had rejected His repeated invitations—would no longer be the one people of God. Still more, they would be visited with the avenging wrath of God, in the destruction of Jerusalem, even before the final triumphant establishment of the New Divine Kingdom. Yet, among the heathen invited to enter it, as among the Jews, God, at the day of judgment, when the kingdom was finally set up for eternity, would separate and judge those who had been wanting in loyalty to Him, and had come into His presence without the preparation demanded. Such would be cast into the outer darkness of Gehenna.

Thus, in the very presence of imminent death, there was the same tranquillity and repose as on the free hills of Galilee, or in the safe retreat of Cæsarea Philippi: the same stupendous claims as Head of the New Kingdom of God, and King over the souls of men, for time and eternity. Within a few hours of crucifixion, and conscious of the fact; in the intervals of mortal contest with the whole forces of the past and present, the wandering Galilæan Teacher, meek and lowly in spirit, so that the poorest and the youngest instinctively sought Him; full of divine pity, so that the most sunken and hopeless penitent felt He was their friend; indifferent to the supports of influence, wealth, or numbers; alone and poor; the very embodiment of weakness, as regarded all visible help, still bore Himself with a serene dignity more than human. In the name of God He transfers the spiritual glory of Israel to His own followers; throws

down the barriers of caste and nationality; extends the new dominion of which He is Head, to all races, and through all ages, here and hereafter; predicts the divine wrath on His enemies in this world, as the enemies of God, and announces the decision of the final judgment as turning on the attitude of men towards Himself and His message. The grandeur of soul which could so utterly ignore the outward and apparent, and realize the essential and eternal; the conscious majesty in the midst of humiliation and danger; the absolute trust that, if the present belonged to His adversaries, the everlasting future, in earth and heaven, was all His own, could spring in such a heart, only because it felt that it was not alone, but that, unseen by man, a greater than man was ever with Him. Only when we realize Him as enjoying unclouded and absolute communion with eternal truth and love—Man, but also the Incarnate Divine—can we hope to solve the mystery.

# CHAPTER LVI.

## JERUSALEM.

CHAP. LVI.

[1] Matt. 22. 15—22. Mark 12. 13—17. Luke 20. 20—26. 12th Nisan, Monday at sunset to Tuesday at sunset (2—3 April).

IT was still Tuesday, and Jesus still remained in the Temple courts.[1] The deputation from the Temple authorities had come to Him in the early morning, only to retire mortified and silenced, but the heads of all parties were threatened by One who demanded changes so fundamental. All alike, therefore, however hostile at other times, made common cause in trying to get the hated Reformer into their power. It was the same spirit, as, in after ages, when far less fiercely roused, burned Arnold of Brescia, and John Huss, and strangled and burnt Savonarola, and slew the thousands of victims of the Inquisition:—the *non possumus* of a corrupt ecclesiastical corporation, which would murder in the name of God, because that could be called orthodoxy; but would not reform, because to do so would touch their interests and their order.

Plot, therefore, thickened on plot. Having themselves failed, the authorities sent some of the Pharisees in company with some Herodians, otherwise their deadly enemies, to try to commit Him by the answers He might give to treacherous questions. Obscure men were chosen, men unknown to Jesus. They were to pretend themselves anxious, as sincere Jews, scrupulous in all duties, to get His counsel on a point much disputed. The snare was no longer laid in the sphere of Rabbinical law, but in the more dangerous one of political obligation, that an ambiguous answer might compromise Him before the Roman procurator. If they succeeded, it would at once transfer the odium of His arrest from themselves: ensure His not being

rescued, and make it possible to get Him put to death, for the power of death was in Pilate's hands alone.



The Pharisees and Herodians, though from different principles, were equally disloyal in heart to the Roman Emperor. The extreme section of the former had developed into the sanguinary zealots—the extreme left, or irreconcilables, of Jewish politics: the Herodians were Jewish royalists, who sighed for the old days of Archelaus and the Edomite dynasty.[2] With dexterous craft, the ultra-orthodoxy of the Pharisaic party allied itself with the discontented royalist faction, to tempt Jesus, if possible, to some bold expression of opinion on the hated question of the payment of the Roman poll tax, which had already excited fierce insurrections. If He held that payment should be refused, He would compromise Himself with the Romans: if He sanctioned it, He would embitter Himself both with the Herodians and the ultra-national party. Danger lay on each hand. On the one, the fierce eyes of the multitude, on the other, the bailiffs of Herod: here, the cry, "Publicans, sinners;" there, a Roman dungeon. To disarm suspicions they used

[2] Ant. xiv. 15. 10.

> "Smooth dissimulation, taught to grace
> A devil's purpose with an angel's face."

"Teacher," said they, with soft accents and humble looks, "we know—indeed, we are fully convinced—that thou teachest what God requires of man as his duty in all matters, truly and rightly, and troublest not thyself about the opinions of men, but fearlessly and nobly speakest what truth demands, without thinking of consequences, and without caring who hears thee, whether he be rich, or poor, learned or simple, powerful or lowly. Is it lawful for us Jews to pay tribute to Cæsar or not? We are the people of God: God is our King: is it in accordance with the allegiance we owe to Him, as such, to recognize any other king, as we must do if we pay taxes to Cæsar?" It was on such reasoning that Judas the Gaulonite had based his fierce revolt against payment of the tax demanded after the census of Quirinius,[3] and his name and opinions were venerated by the closely-packed multitude around. Every Galilæan among them expected a stern avowal of the

[3] Ant. xviii. 1. 1.

CHAP. LVI. illegality of the demand. For Judas had taught the youth of the country that to pay taxes to a heathen state was not allowable, and defiled the land, and thousands had already died for this cause, or lived as fugitives in the caves of the north.

The mode of approach adopted was well fitted to throw Jesus off His guard. Recognition, even by Pharisees, as the brave, frank, fearless Man of God, and appeal to Him in a matter which might cost the questioner His life, were, alike, ensnaring. Frankness demanded frankness. The courage of the question demanded as much in the reply. Jesus knew, besides, that such ideas were always fermenting in the mind of the Pharisee youth, and that the Herodians, instead of being friends of Rome, anxiously desired a change. Why, therefore, should He distrust the new allies? The Roman supremacy was, undoubtedly, at bottom, a usurpation. The strict Jew recognized no ruler but Jehovah, and, since Jesus had devoted His life to founding a " Kingdom of Heaven," it seemed only natural that He should hold His followers free from obligations to the kingdoms of the world. They could not comprehend the spirituality of His conceptions, for had they not had a secret suspicion, that, in spite of appearances, He really meditated an attack on the Roman government, they would hardly have asked such a question. Could they only bring Him to reveal these secret thoughts, His death at the hands of the Romans was certain, as a crafty conspirator, and the hierarchical party would get their revenge, without the odium of exacting it, against the daring and determined transgressor of Rabbinical law.

But Christ's answer scattered their subtle plans to the wind.

"You hypocrites!—you actors!" replied He; "I see through your designs, and value your deceitful flatteries at their worth. Why do you thus seek to entrap me, under pretence of religious scruples, which you wish me to solve for you? Bring me the coin you pay as the Roman tax." A Roman denarius was presently brought Him—a coin which the Jew hated intensely, for it was that in which the poll tax was paid, and was, thus, the sign of slavery to the

heathen. Besides, it bore the idolatrous image of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, and the legend of his authority. The Emperors, to Vespasian, to spare Jewish feeling, had a special coinage struck for Judea, without a likeness on it, and only the name of the Emperor and the traditional Jewish emblems. But other coins, stamped with the image of Augustus or Tiberius, naturally found their way to Jerusalem, especially at the feasts. Such a coin was now handed to Jesus, with the hope, doubtless, that the double abomination—the idolatrous image on one side, and the legend of Jewish subjection on the other—might provoke Him to some treasonable expression. But the result proved the reverse.

"Whose image and superscription is this?" asked He.

"Cæsar's."

"Render, then, to Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's, and to God, the things that are God's."

Nothing could be said after such an answer. The head of the Emperor on the coin, and the legend round it, were overt proofs of the existing state of things, and of the *de facto* right of the imperial government, as such, to levy taxes. Hence followed, not only the lawfulness, but the duty, of paying what was thus due to the Emperor, including the tax in question, since the very coin in which it was payable showed, on its face, that it was the lawful claim of the ruling power. "But," added He, "your theocratic duty is in no way compromised by such political duties as subjects. Pay also, what is demanded by God as your spiritual King, as a legal claim of His government,—the Temple tax, and all that He demands from you besides as His spiritual subjects." The treacherous question was answered with a clearness, precision, and wisdom, which defined, for all ages, the relations of His kingdom to the civil power. The Christian was not to oppose existing authority, but to unite his duty to it, with his duty to God. The political and religious spheres, were declared not opposite but co-existing, and harmonious though distinct.

To realize the immense significance of this utterance, delivered as it was, on the moment, without an instant's hesitation, we must remember that it introduced an entirely

CHAP. LVI.

new conception of the relation of Church and State. Till then, over the world, they had been identical. The Cæsar was chief priest as well as emperor, and the colleges of priests and augurs were political institutions.[4] In Judea, the two spheres, henceforth to be separated, had, hitherto, been confused and intermixed; the civil power was the instrument of the priest; its institutions were religious, and the priesthood had striven after kingly power and rank. Henceforward, the new society was to stand apart from political interests and authorities. The State was no longer indispensable to its perfect completeness and efficiency. The sphere of religion was that of the conscience, which is, by its nature, free. The State cannot leave the payment of its impositions to goodwill; it must enforce them, if they be refused: but force is utterly opposed to the idea of the Kingdom of God. In it voluntary service alone has value. What is yielded to force, without inner truth and love, is, before God, as if not given at all; what is given in hypocritical self-interest, is an abomination to Him.[5]

[4] Mommsen's Gesch. ii. 424; iii. 478.

[5] Schenkel, 240.

No wonder such an answer filled the messengers of the hierarchical party with astonishment. It was not only not treasonable, but indirectly pressed on the hierarchy the conscientious discharge of its duties to Rome. But they could not grasp its whole significance, for they had no conception of a religious community which had not the right and power to inflict civil penalties. The Old Testament economy was, itself, the State. Obedience to its requirements was enforced by the national courts, and an attempt to change or transgress them was severely punished. Jesus Himself, indeed, was about to atone with His life for His offences against the established and traditional religious usages and opinions of the ruling caste. The idea of freedom of conscience and faith, which was the very starting-point of His teaching, was a stumbling-block, and a ground of bitterness, to His age. The conception of a religion, in which there was no responsibility except to God, was beyond it.

All the influential Jewish parties had now united against Him, as a dangerous innovator, an enemy of the Rabbinical "hedge" of human prescriptions and refinements, which was

the essence of the religion of the day. If tolerated longer He might win over the people to favour His demand for fundamental reform. The Pharisees and Herodians had hardly left Him, when some aristocratic Sadducees renewed the attack. The clergy of all classes, from highest to lowest, were against Him. His support was among the people. His appearance in the Temple, His assumption of authority over it, and His lofty claim to be the Messiah, filled the official world with alarm, and united them to crush Him. But the Sadducees had none of the earnestness of the Pharisees. They were the prototypes of the scoffing and infidel priests whom Luther found, almost fifteen hundred years after, in Rome; who parodied even the words of the Holy Sacraments they were busied in consecrating.[6] The Pharisees had early taken offence at Jesus, for they were zealots for the Rabbinism which He attacked; but the Sadducees—few, rich, dignified; the primate and bishops of the day—affected at first only to despise the Galilæan, who, like so many before Him, had, stirred up commotion for the time among His rude compatriots. Even now, in Jerusalem, they were disposed to look at Him and His adherents with a lofty contempt, and to laugh the foolish rabble who listened to Him out of their fanatical dreams. His claims were, in their opinion, more silly than dangerous, and they would, therefore, bring the whole matter into contempt, by making it ridiculous.

[6] Michelet's Luther, 16.

For this end they had carefully selected, from the cases invented by Rabbinical casuistry, that of a wife, who was supposed, in accordance with the Mosaic law, to have married in succession seven brothers,[7] each of whom died without children. Though an imaginary, it was a possible case, for the Law enacted, that, if a husband died without leaving a son to perpetuate his name, his brother must marry the widow, and the first-born son of this second marriage was to be entered in the public register as the son of the dead man.[8]

[7] Matt. 22. 23—33. Mark 12. 18—27. Luke 20. 27—40.

[8] Deut. 25. 5. Ewald's Alterth. 239. De Wette's Archäologie, 157.

Not believing in the doctrine of the resurrection themselves, and supposing that Jesus, who, they had heard, taught it, held the same notions as they ascribed to the Pharisees, they fancied they could cover Him and it with ridicule, by a skilful use of

CHAP. LVI.

this case. Some of the Rabbis, indeed, had purer conceptions than others, teaching that in the kingdom of the Messiah, after the resurrection, or at least in the future world, the just would neither eat, drink, nor marry.[9] But they were exceptions, for the popular belief, as expressed by the Rabbis generally, was gross and unworthy in the extreme. The resurrection would not only restore men to their former bodies, but to their bodily appetites and passions; they would not only eat, drink, and take wives, but would rise in the clothes they wore in life, if buried with them, and even with all their bodily blemishes and defects, "that men might know them to be the same persons as they knew in life."[10] Even the case supposed by the Sadducees, had been settled in principle,—"for the woman who had married two husbands in this world," says the Book Sohar, "will be given to the first, in the world to come."

[9] Berachoth, f. 17. 1. Jalkut Simeoni, i. 34. 4. Jalkut Rubeni, 134. 1.

[10] Eisenmenger, ii. 949, 935, 936.

Fancying there was no sanction, either for the immortality of the soul or the resurrection, in the Pentateuch, the Sadducees sneered at both doctrines. "They deny the resurrection after death," says the Talmud, "and maintain that it is as vain to hope that a cloud which has vanished will appear again, as that the grave will give back its dead."[11]

[11] Quoted in Nork, 88. The *Art.* "Auferstehung," in Bibel Lex., gives an admirable history of the doctrine, in Jewish Theology.

Coming to Jesus, with a well-bred politeness, they put their question softly, addressing Him respectfully, as the Pharisees and Herodians had done, as Rabbi, for which they used the current Greek equivalent.

"Your ideas respecting these things are wrong," replied Jesus, "from your not understanding correctly the Scriptures which refer to them. The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage, because they are mortal, and marriage is necessary to perpetuate the race. But those who shall be counted worthy to enter the Heavenly Kingdom of the Messiah, and will be raised from the dead to do so, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, for they will be immortal, like angels; and hence there is no reason for their marrying and raising children, to take their place, as with men in this world. As sons of the resurrection, they are sons of God, and, like the angels, will live for ever.

"As to the resurrection of the dead, you have referred to Moses. But let me also refer to him. Even he shows, in the passage in which we are told of the vision at the burning bush, that the dead are raised. For he calls Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now, God cannot be the God of persons who do not exist, and, therefore, the patriarchs, though their bodies were dead, must themselves have been still living—living, I mean, in the separate state, and awaiting the resurrection. Thus, God regards all the dead as still living, and how easy, if this be the case, for Him to raise them hereafter!"

"Rabbi, Thou hast spoken well," said some Scribes, as He closed. They were, for the moment, won to His side, by His triumph over their bitter Sadducee enemies. Meanwhile, the people were more than ever astonished at His teaching, and disposed to think Him a prophet.

It soon spread abroad that the Sadducees had been silenced, but the Pharisees had already prepared a new attempt to entrap Him.[12] One of them, who had listened to the dispute—a Scribe, or master of the Law—had been selected to be their spokesman, but, as it proved, was only half-hearted in his task. The Rabbis taught that there were great and small commands in the laws—the one hard and weighty, the other easy and of less moment. Their idea of greatness, however, was independent of the religious importance of a particular precept, and had regard only to their own external precepts, founded on it. Thus, commands were especially called great, to the transgression of which excommunication was attached; such as observance of the Sabbath, in their sense; of circumcision, of the minutest rites of sacrifice and offering, of ceremonial purity, and the like. The precepts respecting the structure of the booths at the Feast of Tabernacles, and of the washing the hands, were, on the contrary, counted small. But, in spite of this nominal difference, obedience to all was alike imperative, and, in practice, both classes were treated as alike weighty. To honour one's parents and to let a mother-bird fly when the young are taken; not to kill and to wash the hands, were put on a level, and had an equal reward.[13]

[12] Matt. 22. 34—40. Mark 12. 28—34.

[13] Keim, iii. 150.

CHAP. LVI.

Even the injunctions of the Rabbis respecting the zizith, or tassels of their scarves, were "great." "The words of the Rabbis," says the Talmud, "are to be prized above those of the Law, for the words of the Law are both weighty and light, but those of the Rabbis are all weighty."[14] If Jesus answered as the Pharisees hoped, He would once more commit Himself, as an enemy of the traditions, and expose Himself to new charges.

It may be, there was, besides, a lurking desire to elicit some utterance respecting His claims to a more than human authority. Stones had been lifted more than once, to put Him to death as a blasphemer, who made Himself equal with God. How would He express Himself in the face of the first command of the Decalogue?

His reply, as always, goes to the root of the matter, simplifying the whole sweep of "the Ten Words" into brief and easily remembered principles. He avoided the least approach to anything that could give offence to the most zealous supporter of the Old Testament, and, at the same time, gave no handle for accusation of any slight of the Rabbinical precepts.

"Teacher," said the legalist, "which is the great and first commandment in the Law?"

No one could take Jesus by surprise at any time, but in this sphere He was, if we may so speak, especially at home, as He had shown a few days before, in His conversation with the young ruler, near Jericho. With a full sense of the peril of His position, He answered with more fulness than usual, leaving no ground for misapprehension, but giving as little for offence. He had named only one command as great, to the young ruler—the love of our neighbour—but to the Scribe He gave two, as forming, together, "the great and first commandment." Neither was abridged, or subordinated to the other, and in the two He formed the principle from which obedience of all the rest would follow. With sure hand, He turned first to the Fifth Book of Moses, then to the Third, for the two great guiding stars which all the host of lesser commands followed.[15] "Hear, O Israel," said He: "Jehovah, our God, is one God"[16]—the

[14] Hurwitz, in his Sagen der Hebraer, has a laboured attempt to explain this (xxix.), but it is a failure.

[15] Keim, iii. 151.

[16] Deut. 6. 4, 5. Lev. 19. 18.

words in which every Israelite, each morning, confessed his faith in Jehovah—"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the great and first commandment. A second is like it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other command greater than these. On these two hang the whole Law and the prophets."

He had once more shown His greatness as a teacher, by summing up our whole duty in the fundamental conceptions of religion and morality: in the love to God, which is also love to His children, our fellow-men. Nor were the various commands of any part of the Scriptures overlooked; the religious and moral precepts of the prophets, no less than the Law, were honoured and made binding for ever.

"Thou hast spoken well and truly," broke in the scribe, "for God is One, and there is no other but He, and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding,[a] and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as one's self, is of greater consequence than all the whole burnt offerings of the Law, the morning and evening sacrifice, and all other sacrifices besides."

"Thou art not far from the kingdom of God," replied Jesus, as He heard words which showed that the speaker was no mere man of his party, but was accessible to higher impulses. The Galilæan had proved very different from what he had been led to anticipate. His answers had not only silenced His enemies, but had half won some of them to His side. Henceforth, all, alike, kept aloof from one from whom chief priests and Rabbis equally went away humbled.

As on the day before, the defeat of all the attacks on Him was followed by His taking the offensive, but only in a mild, instructive conflict with prejudice and misapprehension. He had openly assumed the Messiahship, but in a sense entirely in contrast with the popular conception. That He fulfilled none of the conditions expected alike by the authorities and the people, in the Messiah, had given the former the pretext for spreading it abroad that He was an impostor; a cry caught up,

CHAP. LVI.

in the end, only too widely, by the Jerusalem populace. He would now show the Pharisees, if they chose to listen, that their preconceptions were wrong, when tested by Scripture, and thus expose the worthlessness of the arguments on which they based their light denial of His Messiahship.

Turning unexpectedly to a knot of Pharisees who hung near, to watch as He was teaching, He asked them[17]—

[17] Matt. 22. 41—46. Mark 12. 35—37. Luke 20. 41—44.

"What is your opinion about the Messiah; I mean, as to His lineage and extraction—whose son is He?"

"The son of David," answered they, at once.

"How is it, then," replied Jesus, "that David, in the hundred and tenth Psalm, which you Rabbis justly refer to the Messiah,[18] says, by inspiration of God, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, the Messiah, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. Thy mighty sceptre will the Eternal stretch forth out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thy foes.' If He be David's Lord, how can He be his Son?"

[18] See extracts in Nork, lviii.

The true answer they must have given, had they given any, was one which had not entered their thoughts. It would have been—He is David's Son by His human descent, but, as the Son of God, proceeding from the Father, He is exalted far above David and all mankind, and therefore was rightly called by David, his Lord. But this twofold relation of the Messiah to their great king, and, with it, the true estimate of the dignity and office of the Messiah, were not in their theology. The exposition of Jesus might displease the Rabbis, but it was heard with eager ears by the multitude around.

A new scene now opened. Day after day, the hostility of His enemies had shown itself more fierce, as they found it increasingly hopeless to overcome Him by legitimate weapons or argument. The people, however, were more friendly, and regarded Him as, at least, a prophet, if not the Messiah. He had hitherto maintained only a defensive attitude, but the clear purpose shown to put Him out of the way, made all further reserve or caution useless. With the calmness of a profound conviction, and the clearest statement of His grounds, He proceeded to open a vigorous attack,

that the contrast between Himself and His opponents might be beyond question. Every one must be enabled to judge intelligently on which side he would take his place. He desired, henceforth, only a speedy decision of the struggle.

He now, therefore, broke out, before the multitude, in a last terrible denunciation of the moral and religious shortcomings of His adversaries. These He summed up under the two great heads of hypocrisy and selfishness; they made a pretence and a gain of religion. Yet their doctrines and decisions were substantially right; it was their practice He condemned.

"The Scribes and Pharisees," said He, "have taken possession of the seat of Moses, to continue his office as lawgiver, by explaining and teaching the Law.[19] They are his official successors; therefore, obey their decisions. But do not imitate their lives, for they teach what they do not practise. They heap together their rules and demands, into heavy burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they will not help those whom they thus load by so much as the touch of a little finger. They shirk many rites and forms which they demand from others as sacred duties. Their requirements are a load on the conscience, which deadens and destroys it. To exalt their order, they make slaves of the people, paralyzing by their countless laws all true virtue, freedom, and love. They act only with an eye to effect; to be thought more religious than others; and reap consideration and profit from this reputation. They come out to pray in their most pious robes, especially now, at the feast, and wear phylacteries of extra size on their forehead and arm that they may be noticed; and the very tassels[20] hung, in honour of the Law, at the corners of their abbas, are larger than those of others. To get honour, they strive for the highest places at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and court salutations in the crowded market-place, and the sounding title, Rabbi. Have nothing to do with such proud names, for I, only, am your Rabbi or teacher, and all ye are brethren. They like to be called 'Father,' but call no teacher on earth your father, for one only is your Father; God, in Heaven. And do not, like them, be called Leaders,

[19] Mark 12. 38, 39. Luke 20. 45, 46. Matt. 23. 1—12.

[20] Herzog, Encykl. iv. 682.

CHAP. LVI.

for you have only one Leader, Me, the Messiah. The highest place among my disciples is quite otherwise obtained than among them, for he who seeks to be great among you can become so, as I have said before, only by being the servant of the rest. This lowliness is itself his greatness. For he who exalts himself shall be humbled at my coming, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Rising, as He proceeded, He now broke out into a lofty utterance of indignation at such principles and conduct.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! Ye plunder the houses of desolate widows, left without protectors, and, to hide your doings, make long prayers while at such work![21] For you say in your hypocrisy, 'Long prayers make a long life,' and some of you boast that you pray nine hours a day![22] Believe me, you will receive for all this the greater damnation hereafter.

[21] Matt. 23. 13—39. Mark 12. 40. Luke 20. 47.

[22] Hor. Heb. ii. 296.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! Ye stand in the gate-way of the Kingdom of Heaven, that Kingdom I have come to set up, and not only do not yourselves enter, but even close the doors I have opened, that you may keep those from entering, who wish to do so.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! Instead of helping men into the Kingdom of the Messiah, ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte,[23] that your party may profit by him, and, when he is gained, what do you make of him? A son of hell, by your example, two-fold more even than you are yourselves.

[23] Ant. xx. 2. 1.

"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'If any one swear by the Temple, it is not binding; but if he swear by the gold which belongs to the Temple—the gilding, the golden vessels, or the treasure—he is bound by his oath.' Fools and blind! for which is the greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifies the gold? You say, in the same spirit, 'If any one swear by the altar, his oath is not binding on him; but if he swear by the gift that he has laid on the altar, he must keep his oath.' Fools and blind! for which is the greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? He who swears by the altar swears by it, and by all the things on it, and he who swears by the Temple swears by it, and

by Him that dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God, and by Him who sits on it.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! for ye affect to be so strict in observing the Law that you pay a tenth to the Temple of even the sprigs of mint and anise and cummin in your garden borders, and yet at the same time you neglect the great commands of the Law; to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. You ought certainly to attend to the lighter demands of the Law, but surely not to leave the far greater neglected. Blind guides, who strain out the gnat from the wine and swallow the camel! Sticklers for worthless trifles, regardless of matters of moment.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! Ye make clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but, within, they are full of robbery and incontinence. Blind Pharisee, clean first the inside of the cup and dish, that the wine taste no more of plunder and lust, and that the outside may not only seem clean by your washing it, but *be* clean, by the taking away of that defilement which your life gives it, in spite of your cleansings.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! You are like the whitewashed tombs all over the land—fair outside, but full within of the deadliest uncleanness—the bones of men, and all corruption. You pass yourselves off as religious, but in your hearts you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

Over against the eastern hall in which Jesus now stood, and from which He looked down into the Valley of the Kedron, lay, on the slope of the Mount of Olives, the tombs of the Prophets, the southmost of which is yet known as the Tomb of Zechariah. In sight of these monuments, ranging His eyes from grave to grave, He burst out afresh—

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, actors! Ye build fine tombs over the old prophets, and beautify those of the saints, and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in their martyrdom of these holy men.' But when you call them 'your fathers,' you bear witness that you are their sons—and you are, not only in natural descent, but in your spirit. You are of kin

CHAP. LVI.

in heart to the prophet-murderers! Fill up, therefore, the measure of iniquity your fathers before you filled in their day,—by slaying me and those I shall send to you! Serpents! brood of vipers, for vipers your fathers were, and vipers are ye, how can ye escape the judgment of hell! That ye may not do so, behold, I send to you prophet-like Apostles, and Rabbis, and Scribes. Some of them ye shall kill and crucify; some ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city—that on you, the leaders of the people, may come the punishment of all the innocent, righteous blood shed on the earth; from the blood of righteous Abel to that of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, who was stoned by command of King Joash[24] in the court of the Temple, between the shrine and the altar. Believe me, all these things will come in this generation." Zechariah, of old, had denounced the sin of Israel, as Jesus had that of the priests and Rabbis. "Why transgress ye," he had asked, "the commandments of the Lord? Ye cannot prosper! Because ye have forsaken Jehovah, He hath forsaken you."[25]

[24] Ant. ix 8. 3.

[25] 2 Chron. 24. 20.

"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem," He continued, "that killest the prophets, and stonest those sent in love to thee; how often have I desired to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, and ye refused to come under my loving protection, by accepting me as the Messiah. Behold, your house is left to you! I go from it. The time of the divine help and guard, over you and your city, which I was sent to offer, is past.

"I tell you ye shall not see me henceforth, after my death, which is near at hand, till I appear again in my glory. Then, you shall be only too eagerly willing to hail me as the Messiah, though now ye refuse even to let others thus hail me. Then, when too late, you will cry, as the crowds did as I entered your city, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"

Thus, the breach between the Future and the Past was finally made complete. The whole hierarchy, from the high priest its primate, to the Levite its curate, and the Rabbi its university professor or tutor, had been denounced before

the people, in language which they must resent if they were to retain any authority at all. Either Jesus, or the Church as it was, with all its innumerable personal interests, must perish. It had come to this, indeed, before this last tremendous indictment of the system, and the certainty that nothing could avert His being sacrificed to the fanaticism and vested interests arrayed against Him, had alone caused such a protest. He had no reasons for further reserve. It was fixed that He must die at their hands, and the irreconcilable opposition between the system for the sake of which He was to be martyred, and His own character and work, must, once more, for the last time, be brought out in full contrast, that every one might choose for himself for which he would decide.

The infinite moral grandeur and purity of Jesus, His absolute truth, His all-embracing love, His lowly humility, His sublime consecration to the will of His Father, His intense moral earnestness, His spirit of joyful self-sacrifice for the moral and spiritual good of mankind, shine out nowhere more transcendently, than when contrasted, in this parting lament, with the wretched sophistries and reverence for the infinitely little, which marked the Rabbinism He opposed. The spirit of the market or the booth, in religion, found no sanction at His hands; He would have no huckstering for heaven by a life of petty formalities; He abhorred all cant and insincerity, and all trading with religion; all striving after mere outward success, for ulterior and unworthy ends. He would have no divorce of religion from morality; it was with Him a living principle in the heart, not a rubric of external acts; its outward expression was a holy life, but the holiness without was only the blossoming of a similar holiness within. In Rabbinism, on the opposite, there was formal piety, with no moral earnestness: an absorbing zeal for artificial duties, with which the conscience had nothing to do; and an elaborate multiplication of rules and rites, for the express aim of obtaining the absolute spiritual dependence of all, on the teaching caste. The whole system had been originated and developed to its fulness, to be a "hedge" round the Law, and thus secure fidelity to the

politico-religious constitution of the nation, and its minutest details were strenuously enforced to secure this end. Unquestioning acceptance of tradition, and the deepening and extending of the ghostly influence of the authorities, were the two great points kept in view. There were true Israelites, like Nathanael, or Zechariah, or Simeon, or Joseph, in spite of a system thus lifeless and corrupting; but it was vain to hope for anything but evil, in the community at large, under its reign. Insincerity and immorality in the teachers of a religion can only multiply and perpetuate themselves in their disciples.

The theology and hierarchy of Judaism had become, in fact, what Jesus openly declared them—whitewashed sepulchres—pure to the eye, but with only death and corruption within. They had proved that they were so, by rejecting Him, because He demanded moral and religious reform. Wedded to the false and immoral, they rather killed Him than let Him lead them back to God.

Over such a state of things He could only raise His sad lamentation! Judaism had chosen its own way, and left Him to His.

## CHAPTER LVII.

### THE INTERVAL.



AFTER His terrible parting denunciation of the religious leaders of the nation, Jesus passed into the great fore-court of the women, fifteen steps below that of the men. It was a wide space of a hundred and thirty-five cubits in length and breadth, and was open to the people at large. Popular assemblies, indeed, were at times held in it, and it was the scene of the torch-dance at the Feast of Tabernacles. It was especially frequented, however, by both sexes, because the building was there in which the pious presented their offerings.

Jesus had sat down to rest, after the multiplied excitements of the past hours, over against the treasury, where the continuous stream of persons casting in their money necessarily attracted His notice. As each came, He could judge by his appearance how much he threw in. The poor could only give paltry copper coins, but the rich cast in gold and silver; some, doubtless, from an honest zeal for the glory of God; others, because alms, in the sordid theology of the day, had their commercial value in the future world.

Among others, came a poor widow, with her two lepta—one-twelfth of our penny each[a]—the smallest of copper coins. She could not have cast in less, for one lepton was not received as an offering. The sight touched the heart of Jesus. "Believe me," said He, to those around, "this poor woman has cast in more than any one, for they have only given of their superfluity, but she, in her need—for she has less than enough—has thrown in all she had for her day's living."

[a] Mark 12. 41—44. Luke 21. 1—4.

Among the multitude of pilgrims to the feast, then in

Jerusalem, were many foreign proselytes. That they should have come up, though heathens by birth, showed an earnest sincerity, for it exposed them to ridicule and even worse, from their own countrymen. Many of them, doubtless, men like the centurion at Capernaum, or like the Ethiopian eunuch, were men won over to faith in Jehovah, and to a loyal respect for the great doctrines of the Old Testament: proselytes of the gate, in distinction from the proselytes of righteousness, who, by circumcision, had become, in all religious and social respects, Jews. The spread of a Jewish population in all countries, and the immunities they enjoyed, had resulted in the conversion of great numbers of Gentiles, who were willing to pledge themselves to what were called the seven commands of Noah—the avoidance of murder, bloodshed, or robbery: obedience to the Jewish courts in matters of religion: the rejection of idolatry, and the worship of Jehovah: and to eat no freshly-killed and still bleeding flesh. They were received as "the strangers within the gate" of Israel, and could attend the synagogues, but could not pass beyond the Court of the Heathen, in the Temple.[1]

[1] Proselyten, in Herzog, Winer, and Bibel Lex.

Of this class, some Greeks, then at Jerusalem for the feast, which they were in the habit of attending, had heard much of Jesus: perhaps had seen Him and listened to His discourses, and were anxious to know Him personally, that they might have His personal counsels. Too modest to come direct, they applied to Philip, the only Apostle bearing a Greek name, though Andrew is of Greek origin. To him Philip forthwith mentioned the circumstance, and the two communicated it to Jesus. It filled His heart with much-needed joy, to welcome men who must have seemed to Him an earnest of His future triumphs, among the great heathen nations. As Bengel says, "it was the prelude of the transition of the kingdom of God from the Jew to the Gentile."

He went out to them, therefore, to the Court of the Heathen, and they, doubtless, heard from His lips the counsels desired. The incident brought to His mind, with fresh vividness and force, the nearness of His death, through

which His salvation was to be brought to the heathen world at large,[2] and His emotion broke forth in words, full of sublimity.

[2] John 10. 15, 16; 12. 20—36.

"The hour has come," said He, lifting His face, as we may believe, to heaven, as He spoke—"the hour appointed in the counsels of my Father, from eternity, when the Son of man shall enter into His glory by death.[3] For it must be that I die, that my work may bear its due fruits—as the grain must fall into the ground and perish, that it may bring forth the harvest. Verily, verily, I say to you, it must be so. My life remains limited and bound up in myself, as the life is in the seed, till I die. It cannot, till then, pass beyond me to others, and multiply. But when I die, I shall be like the corn, which, in its death, imparts its life to what springs from it.

[3] Ch. 17. 5; 6. 62 1 Pet. 1. 11.

"As it is needful for me thus to die, to make my work triumph, so, also, is it for you, my followers, in your own case. He who so loves his life as not to be willing to yield it for my kingdom, will lose eternal life hereafter; but he who, in this world, cheerfully gives up even his life for me, as if he hated it in comparison with loyalty to me, will gain life everlasting. If any man wish really to serve me, let him imitate me in my joyful readiness even to die; and he will receive, as his reward, that where I go, to the right hand of my Father in heaven, there, also, will he follow, and dwell with me; for if any one thus truly and self-sacrificingly serve me, my Father will honour him by giving him the glory of the life hereafter."

The awful vision of the immediate future, meanwhile, for a moment, raised a shrinking of human weakness. It was the foreshadowing of Gethsemane.

"Now, is my soul troubled," cried He, with a voice of infinite sadness.[4] In His agony of soul, He hesitated for a moment, before all through which He had so soon to pass, and it seemed as if He were even now enduring it. "What shall I say?" He added, as if communing with Himself; "Shall I pray—Father, save me from the hour of darkness: take this cup from me? No, let it not be: all the past has been only a progress towards it, that by it I might glorify

[4] John 12. 27 ff.

Thy name!" The momentary human shrinking from the Cross had passed away as soon as it had risen. The cloud that dimmed the clear heaven of His soul had disappeared. His trouble of soul gave place, on the instant, to the victorious consciousness of the great future to flow from His accomplishment of the purpose of God for the salvation of the world. Then, as if He were repeating aloud His inward thought, He burst forth into the words—"Father, glorify Thy name, as Thou hast purposed, through my death for man. I come to do Thy will, O God, and I give myself up to Thee!"

Forthwith came a wondrous attestation, sealing the divine authority of our Saviour's mission with the stamp of august and transcendent glory. Suddenly there sounded a voice from the cloudless April sky, with a volume that filled the heavens, so that some, overpowered by its grandeur, could not think of it as an utterance of articulate words, but fancied that it thundered—"I *have* glorified My name, already, in having sent Thee, and in all Thy sinless and gracious life, till now; and I *shall* glorify it again, by Thine entrance on Thy heavenly glory through the gates of death!"

"It thunders," muttered some, whose souls were least quick to realize what had happened. "No," said others, with truer religious sensibility—"It was an angel speaking to Him. He is a prophet, at least; if not the Messiah Himself, and God speaks, thus, to Him, by a heavenly messenger." But the disciples around, and Jesus Himself, knew whence it came, and what were the precise words from the excellent glory.

"You may not understand," said Jesus to the disciples and the crowd, "whence this voice comes, and why it is sent. It is the voice of My Father in heaven, and comes, not for my sake, but for yours, to take away your unbelief, and to strengthen your faith. The time presses for your decision regarding me. Even now, the judgment of my Father is being given forth, against those who have rejected me as the Messiah. Through the victory of my kingdom, which my death will secure, and the spread of my name over the earth proclaim, the impotence of my

enemies will be shown, and their guilt before God be made clear. He, especially, whom even you call the ruler of this world, and the great enemy of the kingdom of God—the prince of evil—will feel the greatness of my triumph, for his kingdom must yield to mine.[5] My death, as the atonement between God and man, will deliver from his power and place under my protection, as the glorified Shepherd of the sheep, all who believe in my name. Nor will that triumph cease as time rolls on: age after age, till the last day, in ever wider sweep, it will subdue all things under me, and drive the kingdom of darkness from the world.

"So it shall be; for I, if I be lifted up from the earth by the death of the cross, as I know I shall be, and thus pass away from the world and return to my Father, shall draw all men to me; for the power of my cross will be universally felt, and the Holy Spirit, whom I shall send from the Father, will turn men's hearts to love and serve me. The prince of this world has, in Me, his conqueror; for I must reign till all things are put under my feet, and the world be won back to God."

The people round, accustomed to speak freely with the Rabbis on the subject of their addresses, had listened to Him respectfully, but were at a loss to reconcile His words with their preconceived ideas of the Messiah.[6] In the Synagogue, they had heard passages read from the Scriptures, describing Him as a priest for ever, and His dominion as one which should never pass away or be destroyed, but stand for ever and ever,[7] and had come to expect, in consequence, an everlasting reign of the Messiah upon earth. They were at a loss, therefore, to reconcile Christ's use of the name, Son of Man, which they applied to the Messiah, with the statement that, instead of dwelling on earth for ever, as a king over all nations, He should suffer the shameful death of crucifixion. The cross was already the stumbling-block to them it afterwards became so widely to their nation.

"We have heard out of the Law," said they, "that the Christ is to live for ever, on earth. What dost Thou mean, then, by saying that the Son of Man—a name by which we understand, the Christ—must be crucified? Who is this

[5] Eisenmenger, i. 647.

[6] John 12. 34.

[7] Ps. 110. 4. Dan. 7. 14; 2. 44.

CHAP. LVII. Son of Man to whom Thou referrest? What dost Thou mean by using this name, when Thou speakest so contrary to Scripture?"

His time was too short to give a formal explanation. Nor would it have been of any effect in minds so prejudiced, for the fullest explanations of after days made no impression. He chose rather to urge on them, once more, the one course in which lay their eternal safety. Standing at the very close of His public ministrations, He threw into these last words of warning the whole intensity and earnestness of His soul.

"If you wish to comprehend what I have said about my being lifted up,[8] let me tell you how all your questions and difficulties about it may be resolved. I shall be with you only a very little longer; make right use of that time to believe in me, the Light of the World, as the traveller makes use of the last moments of day, to reach safety, before darkness overtake him. With me, the light of truth, which now lights you, will be gone, and you know that he who walks in darkness knows not what way to go. While ye still have me, the Light of Men, believe in the light, that ye may receive illumination from it."

[8] John 12. 35—43.

It was still early in the afternoon, and He might have stayed in the Temple till it shut at sunset, then a few minutes after six in the evening. But these were almost the last words He was to speak as a public teacher. His mission to His nation was ended. There remained only a brief interval of communion with the loved ones round Him, and, then, would come the consummation of Calvary. His work was over, except the final and greatest act of all. Casting a last sad look of quenchless pity on all, He turned away to Bethany, to seek seclusion, till the time came for His self-sacrifice.

It must have been a solemn and well-nigh overpowering moment, thus to bid farewell, for ever, to the Temple of His nation,—the centre of the old kingdom of God;—for the retrospect of His public life, and the vision of the future, must have risen, like a dream, before Him. So far as apparent results went, He had had little success, for, though even His bitterest enemies were forced to own His supernatural power, and the greatness and number of the instances

in which it had been shown: though they had seen His grand self-restraint which always exerted it for others, and habitually ignored any personal end, either of ambition, defence, or retaliation, till they had come to treat Him, not only with disrespect, but even with open violence; secure, in His infinite patience and humility; their prejudices had utterly blinded them, and they steadfastly refused, as a class, to accept, in His person, a Messiah so contrary to their gross and ambitious expectations. There were, indeed, even among the chief rulers and priests, many who believed in Him, but it was only a secret conviction which they had not the courage to own.

The threat of excommunication had been too terrible to brave, and they preferred to cling to their social and civil interests, at the cost of repressing their better thoughts.

Once more, only, was the pleading voice raised. A number of those near apparently followed Him as He retired, and He could not tear Himself from them, without a final outburst of yearning desire for their salvation. Turning round, and raising His voice till the sound rang far and wide, He cried—

"Think not that the faith I demand in myself in any way lessens or takes from the faith that is due to God.[9] To believe in me, and to believe in God, are the same thing. He who has that faith in me, which the proofs I have given of my being sent from God demand, believes not so much in me as in Him who sent me. And thus, also, he who looks on me as that which I have shown myself to be, looks not so much on me as on Him who sent me—on the Godhead of my Father revealed in me. In Me ye have a Light. I came into the world to enlighten men, that every one who yields himself to my guidance, may be as when one walks after a light, and may no longer remain in the darkness of ignorance, superstition, and sin.

[9] John 12. 44—50.

"Yet if any one who hears my words, refuses to believe in Me—let him not think that *I* shall inflict judgment on him for his refusal. The end of my coming is not to judge the world, but, rather, to save it from eternal ruin. He who rejects Me, My words, and My deeds, has in his

own breast a judge that will condemn him hereafter. The truth I have spoken, in the name of God, which he has refused to receive, will condemn him in his own conscience at the last day, and will condemn him also from the lips of the Great Judge. For the words I have spoken have been no mere utterances of my own; I have taught only that which I was commissioned by my Father to speak, and I know that my teaching, if obeyed and followed, secures everlasting life to men. All that I say is only what my Father has told me to speak in His name. Therefore, let no man think that I speak anything but that which my Father has given me to proclaim. I am He whom God hath sent, and my words are the words of God."

Nothing in these last discourses of Jesus had seemed more strange and inexplicable to the Apostles, than His prediction of the early destruction of Jerusalem,[10] and of the Temple itself. As they now passed with Him, through the forecourts, to the outer gate, and down the eastern steps, to the Kedron valley; overpowered by the vast magnificence, which seemed grand enough even for the times of the Messiah, they could not refrain from speaking to Him respecting His strange and mysterious words.

[10] Matt. 24. 1—14. Mark 13. 1—13. Luke 21. 5—19.

"Master," said they, "see what a wondrous structure this is. What stones! what buildings! what splendour! what wealth! How the whole Temple rises, terrace above terrace, from the great white walls, to the Holy Place, shining with gold! and it is not finished even yet!"

The Temple, says Josephus, was built of white stones of great size—the length of each about thirty-seven and a half feet, some even forty-five feet,—the thickness twelve feet, and the breadth eighteen.[11]

[11] Jos. Bell. v. 6. 6. Ant. xv. 11. 3. Assuming the cubit to be only 18 inches. See also Furrer's Wanderungen, 34.

But Jesus looked at all this strength, wealth, and magnificence, with very different eyes. To Him the Jewish theocracy had outlived its day, and had sunk into moral decrepitude and approaching death, which the mere outward splendour of its Temple could not hide. Israel, in rejecting Him, the Voice of God, calling it to rise to new spiritual life, had shown itself ripe for divine judgment. His own death, already determined by the ecclesiastical authorities,

and now close at hand, would seal the fate of the nation and its religion. It would be the proclamation of the passing away of the Kingdom of God on earth from Judaism, now dead in forms and rites, to the heathen nations willing to receive its spirit and liberty.

He knew that the Theocracy would cling to their dream of national independence, and the erection of a mighty political empire of the Messiah, and that this involved a struggle between them and Rome, in which their petty weakness must inevitably be crushed. Strange fate! the moment when they fancied they had secured themselves even from reform, by the resolution to put Jesus to death, was that in which He whose death was to ensure permanence and prosperity, predicted their utter destruction![12]

[12] Schenkel, 255.

"Yes," said Jesus, in utter sadness, "I see all: they are very great buildings, but I tell you solemnly, the day will come when there will not be one stone of them all left on another, not thrown down."[13]

[13] Matt. 24. 2.

He said nothing more, but went out of the city by the blossoming Kedron Valley, with its gardens and stately mansions, a picture of peace and prosperity, to the Mount of Olives. Sitting down on a knoll, to enjoy the magnificent view, so full of unutterable thoughts to the Rejected One, the Apostles had Moriah once more before them in its whole glory, crowned by the marble Temple, like a mountain with snow.

In the group around, Peter and James, and John and Andrew, sat nearest their Master, and, as they looked at all the splendour before them—splendour so great that it was often said that he who had not seen it had missed one of the wonders of the world—their thoughts still ran on the words in which He had doomed it to destruction.[14] They had heard Him say that the nation would not see Him again, till they showed themselves ready to receive Him as the Messiah, and that, in the meantime, the city and Temple should be utterly destroyed. Their only idea of the Messiah, even yet, however, was that of a deliverer of the nation, who, besides any spiritual benefits He might confer, would raise Israel to world-wide supremacy. They could not imagine

[14] Matt. 24. 3.

 that the holy city, and its Temple, would perish before the end of the world, and He must surely come sooner than that, to free Israel from subjection and inaugurate its glory. The destruction of the city, therefore, could not, they fancied, be before the destruction of all things. They would fain know what sign, after this catastrophe, would precede His glorious coming and the final consummation, if it were to be so; that they might recognize His advent when it took place. Their ideas, in truth, were in a hopeless confusion.

"Tell us, Master," said one of the four favoured ones, "when shall these things, of which Thou hast spoken, take place? And what sign will there be of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

It was impossible to explain fully, to minds so filled with preconceived ideas. Much must happen—His death, resurrection, and departure from the earth, before they could acquire just conceptions of His kingdom. Till then, it was hopeless to remove their prejudices. He, therefore, confined Himself, as usual, to the practical, that He might rouse them to watchfulness over themselves, and remove the illusion that the holiness of Jerusalem would preserve it, and that the Messiah must appear first, to deliver the nation from the hand of the Romans.

He fitly began by warning them against false Messiahs. "Take heed," said He, "that no impostor deceive you, by persuading you that he is the Messiah, come, as you expect, to free the nation, and subdue the world, and to spread the Jewish religion over the earth. Many deceivers will rise, calling themselves the Messiah—sent from God to deliver Israel—and saying that the time of this deliverance has come. They will mislead many. Take care that you go not out after them.

"But, to turn to your question—before the Temple is destroyed, you will hear the terrors of wars near at hand and the distant tumult of others, and you may think that they will bring the end. But be not alarmed. They are divinely appointed, and this may serve to calm your minds; but the destruction of the city and Temple will not take place so soon. Nor must you think that these wars will

herald national deliverance: instead of proclaiming an interference of God for the restoration of Israel, they mark the beginning of His judgments. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, and fearful sights in the heavens, here and there, over the earth. Yet, do not think, from these, that God is about to appear for the Jews, and to send them an earthly Messiah. No; all these are only the first pangs of the coming sorrow. Your Rabbis have told you that such things are signs of the speedy advent of the Messiah,[b] but be not deceived.

"Instead of peace, these things will bring you evil. Once more, be on your guard. I shall soon leave you, and would again warn you of the dangers to you which shall precede the last catastrophe. I have told you often, what perils and heavy trials await you, in your founding and spreading my Kingdom, so different in its spiritual and moral unworldliness, from all others. Before the end comes, men will proceed to violence against you, for my name's sake. Your countrymen will lay hands on you, accuse you, and bring you before the local authorities; you will be scourged in the synagogues and thrown into dungeons, and even dragged before kings and Roman governors, that you may witness for Me, my Person, and my Work, before them.

"But let me comfort you, in prospect of such trials. Never forget that I will not forsake you when you thus suffer for my sake, and shall, myself, by the Holy Spirit whom I shall send to your aid, give you words and wisdom for your defence, when you are before tribunals. Be not therefore anxious, when such persecutions rise, for, in the hour of your trial, it will not be you who speak, but the Holy Ghost.

"Yet, let me not conceal from you that they will deliver you up to every form of suffering, and even kill you, and that you will be hated not only by your own nation, because you proclaim me as the Messiah, but by all the heathen nations as well. In this world you can look only for tribulation.

"But a greater trial awaits you than mere persecution from without. The strife of creeds will enter even the

CHAP. LVII. sacred circle of the family; the father will give evidence before the Courts against his own child, the brother against the brother, the child against its parent, the friend against the friend. The fury of heathen and Jewish fanaticism will feel no pity: the nearest blood will rage against its own, and will deliver them up to the executioner. And even in your own number, many will renounce their faith, under the pressure of persecution and trial, and will even betray and deliver up their fellow-Christians to the magistrate, and will hate those from whom they have thus apostatized. My name will indeed become a symbol of hatred and scorn, against every one who confesses it. Still worse, many false Christian teachers will rise in your own bosom, and will mislead numbers. And all this spiritual corruption will sap the brotherly love and religious zeal of great numbers of my followers, for true Christian life cannot thrive where there is moral decay.

"But he who neither renounces my name, nor lets himself be led astray by false teachers, but remains true and loyal to me, till the evil days are over, will receive everlasting honour at my final coming. Such good and faithful servants need have no fear of losing their reward, for nothing can befall them, to hurt or lessen, in the least, their share in the salvation my eternal Kingdom will bring. As regards that, they are perfectly safe. Not a hair of their head, if I may so speak, will perish, so far as their heavenly hopes are concerned. Their faithfulness will gain for them the eternal life of their souls, even should they die as martyrs here.

"Meanwhile the Gospel of the new Kingdom of God will be preached throughout the whole world, that a testimony respecting me may be given to all nations, however they may hate you. Then, but not till then, shall come the end of this present state of things—the old will then pass away, and the new begin. The reign of the kingdom of God will begin when Judaism has fallen, and heathenism has heard its doom.

"The full spread of my Kingdom cannot come so long as that which it is to displace still stands in Jerusalem. The Gospel needs new soil, new means, new powers. The old

religions are so identified with the old civil and political life of men, with their customs and modes of thought, that my Kingdom can hope to found its peaceful reign only after great and terrible revolutions and disturbances.[15] The way will be opened for it by war, with all its horrors, and by the widespread judgments of God on the world at large.

"When, therefore, ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, it will mark the beginning of the end. When you see the holy place in ruins, and desolation reigning there in its hatefulness, as is spoken of in Daniel,[16] let him who is in Judea flee to the hills of Gilead, where he will be safe; let him who is on the house-top not come down to take away his things from the house, but let him flee along the flat roof, to the town wall, and thus escape; and let him who is working in the field, where he has no outer garment, not come back to his house to get it, but let him flee for his life. But woe to those who are with child in those days, and cannot flee, and to those who have children at the breast, and are kept from escaping by vainly trying to save them also. Pray that your flight be not in the winter, with its rains and storms and swollen torrents, nor on the Sabbath day, when he who still clings to Jewish law will think it unlawful to travel more than two thousand cubits. Whatever hinders your swift flight will, indeed, be cause of regret, for the troubles of those days will be great beyond example.

"There will be great distress in the land, and the fierce wrath will be let loose on this nation. Its sons will fall by the sword, and be led off, to be sold as slaves, over the whole earth, and Jerusalem will be trodden under foot of the heathen, as a captive is by his conqueror, till the times allowed by God to the Gentiles, to carry out thus His avenging wrath, be fulfilled.

"And, indeed, if the number of these evil days had not been shortened, in God's pitying mercy, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the chosen ones of the Kingdom of the Messiah, whom God has determined to save from the calamities of these days and preserve alive, they have been shortened.

15 Matt. 24. 15—42. Mark 13. 14—37. Luke 21. 20—36.

16 Dan. 9. 27.

CHAP. LVII.

"But when the Temple has been laid waste, and you have fled for your lives, false Messiahs, and men pretending to be prophets, and to speak in the name of God to the nation in its affliction, will rise, once more, taking advantage of the commotion and anxiety of those days, and will be so much the more dangerous. When men say to you, of any of these, 'The Messiah has appeared here,' or 'He has appeared there,' do not believe it.[c] They will pretend to perform such great signs and wonders, that even the chosen ones of my Kingdom—my disciples—would be deceived, if it were possible. I have warned you of this already, but press on you once more to take heed to it. If, therefore, any one say to you, 'Behold, the Messiah is in the wilderness,' do not go out with him, for they draw their dupes to the wilderness as a safe place for mustering them. If any say, 'Behold, he is in such and such a house, shut up in his secret chambers,' do not believe it.[17] My visible and final coming, respecting which you ask me, will not be such that men need point to this place, or to that, to see me; it will be like the lightning, which shines with instant splendour through all the sky, and announces itself beyond mistake. For, from east to west, the earth will, in that day, be ripe for the judgments of the Messiah, and, as the eagles gather wherever the carcase is, so the Son of Man, then the minister of divine wrath, will reveal Himself to all who have fallen under His condemnation.

"Then, in a future age—when the time of the Gentiles, of which I have spoken, is fulfilled—when He who has prayed long and unfaintingly, like the importunate widow, shall begin to wonder if ever he will be heard[18]—I do not say whether in the second watch, or in the third, or even in the morning:[19] when the bridegroom has tarried while his attendants wait longingly for him[20]—when the unfaithful servant has encouraged himself by the thought that his lord delays his coming[21]—when the Gospel has been preached to all the Gentiles[22]—and when the king may be expected, at last, from the far country to which he has gone[23]—then, suddenly, like the flood in the days of Noah, or the destruction of Sodom, shall the words of the prophets[24] be verified,

[17] Jos. Ant. xx. 3. 6. Bell. Jud. ii. 13. 4, 5.

[18] Luke 18. 1.

[19] Luke 12. 38. Mark 13. 35.

[20] Matt. 25. 5.

[21] Matt. 24. 48.

[22] Mark 16. 15.

[23] Luke 19. 12.

[24] Isaiah 13. 9, 10. Joel 3. 15.

and earth and heaven be veiled, and darkened, and tremble, before the great coming of the Son of Man, to judgment. And then shall they see the sign of His coming, respecting which you have asked—the far-shining splendour around Him, like the sun in its strength—when He descends in the clouds of heaven, with power and with great glory. And He shall send forth His angels, from the midst of the unutterable light; and the great trumpet of God, which will wake the dead, shall sound,[25] and the angels will gather together around Him all who are His—chosen of God to be heirs of the heavenly kingdom of the Messiah—from north, and south, and east, and west—over the whole round of the world. And all the nations of the earth who have rejected me shall mourn, when they see me thus come in divine majesty. And when these wondrous signs begin, then lift up your heads, for your eternal redemption from all the afflictions of time, is at hand.

[25] 1 Cor. 15. 52. 1 Thess. 4. 15, 16.

"When, therefore, soon after my departure from you, ye see all these wars, and hear all these rumours of wars of which I have told you, know that I, the Messiah, am near in my first coming, as ye know that the summer is close, when ye see the branches of the fig-tree, and all other trees, swell, and put forth their buds and tender leaves. For it is I who come, unseen, to judge Jerusalem and the Temple, as I shall, in the end, come visibly to judge all mankind.[26]

[26] Matt. 24. 33. Mark 13. 29. Luke 21. 30.

"Verily I say to you, This generation of living men shall not have passed away, before the beginning of the age of the Messiah, to be ushered in by the fall of Israel, and to be closed by all these signs, has come; when the old world shall have drawn to an end, and my Kingdom—the new age of the world—shall take its place till the consummation of all things. Heaven and earth shall one day pass away, but my words shall not, for all I have told you must happen. All the signs I have predicted, as heralds of my coming to judge Jerusalem and Israel, will assuredly be seen by some of you now round me. And my coming then, will be the revelation of my Kingdom before the world, and of its triumph over its Jewish enemies, for my Kingdom can only, then, truly rise, when the Temple has been destroyed.

CHAP. LVII.

When *it* shall lie strewn in ruins, and desecrated for ever by heathen soldiery, the world that is will be seen to have passed away. There will be an end of the old priesthood and sacrifice, and the earth will be opened to the victory of my spiritual reign.

"But the exact time of the last period of all, of which I have spoken—the destruction of all things visible—the resurrection of the dead, and my return in glory, to judge the nations, I cannot tell you. Even the angels do not know it, nor even does the Son: it is known to my Father alone. This uncertainty of the time of my coming will make men secure and careless, as they were in the days of Noah. For they went on, dreading no catastrophe, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and neither believed nor dreamed that the flood would really happen, till it came, and swept them all away. Like it, my coming will be so sudden, that, of two men in the field, one shall be taken, by the angels sent forth to gather the saints, and the other left—for they will have no time to flee—and, of two slave-girls at the household mill, while they are still grinding, the one shall be taken, in like manner, to be with me, and the other left.

"Take heed to yourselves, and watch, lest at any time, like the people before the flood, you give way to sinful pleasures or indulgences, or be engrossed in the anxieties of life, so as to be careless, and unprepared for my return, and that day come on you, as the flood did on them, unawares. For it will burst on all that dwell on the face of the whole earth, as suddenly and unexpectedly, as the snare flies over the creature caught in its toils.[27]

[27] Matt. 24. 42. Mark 13. 35. Luke 21. 36.

"Take heed, I repeat, and watch: for ye know not when the hour may strike. It will be like the coming of a man who has taken his journey into a far country, and has left his house in the hands of his servants, and given authority over it to them—to each his own special work[28]—and has commanded the keeper of the gate to watch for his return. Watch, therefore, like faithful, diligent servants, for ye know not the hour when I, the Master of the House, shall come, whether it will be in the evening, or at mid-

[28] Matt. 24. 45.

night, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest, if I come suddenly, I find you asleep. And what I say to you, my apostles, I say to all, Be awake and watchful at all times, that ye may be able to escape all the terrors of my coming, by being found faithful, and thus may be set before me by the holy angels, to enter into my glory, and stand before me, as my servants, in my heavenly kingdom.

"You know how a householder would have acted had he known beforehand at what watch of the night the thief would come, to plunder his goods. He would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken into. Therefore, be ready at all times, for the Son of Man will come, when, perhaps, ye least expect Him.

"Who among you will prove himself a good and faithful servant? He will be like a servant of him of whom I have spoken, who took his journey to a far country—a servant set over the household to give them their food in due season, during his absence; who faithfully did it. Blessed will be that servant, whom his lord, when he returns, shall find so doing! Verily I say to you, he will advance him to a far higher post, for he will set him not only over the food of his household, but over all his substance. And blessed, in like manner, will he be whom I, on my return, will find faithful to the charge committed to him in my kingdom!

"But, if, instead of being faithful, you fail in your duty, you will be like a servant of the same master who should say in his heart, 'My Lord delays his coming,' and begin to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, at his master's cost. The lord of that servant will come in a day when he does not look for him, and in an hour when he does not expect him, and will punish him to the uttermost, and make him bear the just fate of a hypocrite. Even so, the hypocrite, in my kingdom, shall be cast out into outer darkness. And, oh! what weeping and gnashing of teeth will be there![29]

"In that day of my final coming it will be as when, at a marriage,[30] the maidens invited to play and sing in the marriage procession, prepare to go out to meet the bridegroom, to lead him to the house of the bride, where the

[29] Matt. 24. 51

[30] Matt. 25. 1—46.

marriage is to be celebrated. Let me suppose there were ten such maidens,—five wise, five foolish. The five foolish ones took their lamps with them, to help the display, and lighten the path of the bridegroom, but they forgot to take oil with them, besides, to refill the lamps, when they had burned out. But the wise not only took their lamps, but oil in their oil flasks as well. All the ten, thus differently prepared, went forth from the home of the bride, and waited in a house, on the way by which the bridegroom must come, to be ready to go out and escort him, when he passed by.

"But he delayed so long that they all grew heavy, and fell asleep. At last, at midnight, they were suddenly roused; for the people in the streets had heard the loud music and shouts, and had seen the light of the lamps and torches of the procession, afar, and raised the cry at the doors—'The bridegroom is coming, go ye out to meet him.' Then they all arose, and trimmed each her own lamp, to have it ready. The foolish ones now found that their lamps were going out, because the oil was all burned, and asked the wise ones to give them of theirs. But they answered, 'We cannot possibly do so, for our oil would assuredly not suffice both for ourselves and you; go, rather, to the sellers, and buy for yourselves.'

"While they were away buying it, however, the bridegroom came, and the five who were ready, joined the procession, and went in with the bridegroom to the marriage and the marriage-feast, and the door was shut. After a time, the other five came, and knocked at the gate with anxious entreaty—'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he answered, "I do not know you. You were not among the other maids of the bride in the procession, and, therefore, you are strangers to me, and as such have nothing to do at my marriage.'

"Learn from this parable that they who patiently watch and wait, doing the duty I have assigned them, till I come, though they know neither the day nor the hour when I shall do so; will have a part in the joys of my heavenly kingdom. All my followers will then be, as it were, my bride, and I their bridegroom; but those who are not faithful

and true to the end, will be shut out from the marriage-feast."



The Apostles and the others who followed Jesus had been sitting long in the cool of the evening on the pleasant slope of Olivet, listening to this wondrous discourse, but their Master's stay with them was now nearly over, and He was as loath to end, as they that He should. He still went on, therefore, and, next, repeated to them the parable He had before delivered near Jericho—of the talents lent by the lord to his servants. Its awful close, however, which represents the unprofitable servant as cast into the outer darkness, with its weeping and gnashing of teeth, brought before Him all the terrors of the last judgment, and led Him to close by a picture of that awful day unequalled for sublimity by any other, even of His own utterances.

"The parable of the talents, my beloved," said He, "shows that every one of you must needs make the utmost possible use, for the interests of my kingdom in your own own hearts and among men, of all the different gifts entrusted to you by me, for my service, according to your respective abilities. For, at my coming, I shall reckon with you all, and those who have been faithful to me shall receive high rewards in heaven, but those who have left their gifts, however small, unused, will have those gifts taken from them, and they themselves will be thrust out of my kingdom."

He then proceeded—in words such as no mere man could ever dream of using—words which we seem to hear spoken with the light as of other worlds shining from the speaker's eyes, and a transfiguration of His whole appearance to more than human majesty.

"I have told you how I shall return invisibly, to earth, before this generation shall have passed away, to judge Jerusalem and Israel, when the cup of their iniquity shall be full; and how, also, I shall come again, in spiritual unseen presence, to be with my servants in their warfare with the powers of darkness, till my kingdom passes from victory to victory, through succeeding ages, and the prince of this world be finally cast down from his usurped throne, and the world become the kingdom of God and of me, His Messiah.[31]

[31] Rev. 11.15.

CHAP. LVII.

"Then shall come that day which I have warned and urged you so earnestly to keep ever in mind[32]—the day when, like the lord who returned from the far country to reckon with his servants—I, the Son of Man, now poor, despised, with none round me but you; rejected by my brethren of Israel, and in a few hours to be nailed on a cross like the meanest slave; will come again as Head of the great kingdom of the Messiah, which will then embrace all nations.

[32] Matt. 25. 31—46.

"The Father has committed all judgment in this kingdom, to me, His Son,[33] and has given me all power in it, in heaven and in earth.[34] And at that day I shall come in my glory, as its Prince and Head, amidst the splendours of heaven, and with all the angels of God.

[33] John 5. 22, 27.

[34] Matt. 28. 18.

"Then will I sit on the throne of my glory; as kings of the earth when they sit to judge; and all nations shall be gathered together before me, by my ministering angels,[35] and I will separate them, one from another, as you have seen a shepherd separate the white sheep from the black goats, and I will set the sheep on my right hand, but the goats on my left.[d]

[35] Matt. 24. 31, &c.

"Then, as King, coming in the majesty of my assembled Kingdom, shall I say to them on my right hand—'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth—that kingdom which I promised as the inheritance of the meek.[36] For ye have proved that ye have truly believed in my name, by the love towards me and mine, which only true faith can yield. For I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and ye gave me welcome: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.'

[36] Matt. 5. 5.

"Then shall the righteous, feeling only their shortcomings, and forgetting their good deeds, think it cannot be as I have said. 'When, Lord,' they shall ask me, 'saw we Thee hungry, and gave Thee maintenance; or thirsty, and gave Thee to drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and gave Thee welcome; or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?'

"And I, the King, will answer them—'Verily I say to you, Inasmuch as ye did it, for my sake, to one of these my brethren, even the least of them; the poor, the lowly, the outcast, the persecuted, the wretched, who believed in me, and are now round my throne—or to one of the least of all my brethren of mankind; for the love ye bore Me, who died for them—ye did it unto me.'

"Then shall I also say to those on my left hand—'Depart from me, accursed, into the everlasting fire; prepared for the devil and his angels, but now to be shared by you, his servants. For I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye did not give me to drink: I was a stranger, and ye would not receive me: naked, and ye did not clothe me: sick, and in prison, and ye did not visit me.'

"Then they will try, vainly, to justify themselves, by pleading innocence. 'Lord,' they will say, 'when did we see Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee? Lord, we never saw Thee thus, and, therefore, have never refused Thee our service.'

"But I will answer them—'Verily I say to you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, my brethren; whom you had with you and might have helped; ye did it not to me. Had ye truly, and not in name only, believed in me, ye would have shown fruits of your faith, in deeds of love for my sake.'

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

# CHAPTER LVIII.

## FAREWELL TO FRIENDS.

CHAP. LVIII.

[1] Tuesday at sunset to Wednesday at sunset, April 3—4. (13th Nisan.)

IT was the twelfth day of the new moon,[1] now rounding to fulness, when the last words had been spoken in the Temple, and farewell taken of it for ever. Jesus had hitherto lingered in its courts till the gates closed, at sunset, after the evening sacrifice, but His soul this day was filled with immeasurable sadness. Israel would not hear the words which alone could save it, and, by its representatives, had not only rejected and blasphemed Him, but was, even now, plotting His death.[2] He had left the Temple courts, therefore, in the early afternoon, to spend some hours with the little band of followers He was so soon to leave. They had sat on the slope of the Mount of Olives, facing the Temple and the city. He had passed quietly and unheeded through the stream of pilgrims and citizens, and had been resting, during His long discourse, in the privacy of His own circle, beneath one of the fig-trees of Olivet, gazing, with full soul, at all He had left for ever. Had they known it, the high priests and rulers would have seen, in His final abandonment of "His Father's House," a portent more awful than any their superstitious fears were even then noting. For, forty years before the destruction of the Temple, and, therefore, in the very days of our Lord's public life, it had been seen, with unspeakable alarm,—if we may trust the Talmud—that the hindmost lamp of the sacred seven-branched candlestick, in the Holy Place, one night went out; and, that the crimson wool tied to the horns of the scape-goat; which ought to have turned white when the atonement was made, had remained red; and "the lot of the Lord," for the goat to be offered on the Day of Expiation, had come out on the left

[2] General authorities for the chapter:—Kuinoel, Lange, Meyer, Rosenmüller, McClellan, Lightfoot, Schöttgen, *Arts.* on "Passover" in Herzog, Winer, Schenkel, Smith, and Kitto; De Wette, Paulus, Lücke, Luthardt, and the various Lives of Jesus.

hand; and the gates of the Temple, duly shut overnight, had been found open in the morning.[3] A generation later, it was to be told, with pale lips, among the heathen, that when the Temple was near its fall, a more than human voice had been heard from the Holy of Holies, crying "The gods have departed," and that presently, a great sound, as of their issuing forth, had been heard.[4]

[3] Lightfoot, Hor Heb. ii. 325.

[4] Tacit. Hist. v. 13.

But the true hour of Jehovah's leaving it, and that for ever, was when His Son passed that afternoon through its gates, to re-enter them no more.

Rising after He had ended His discourse on the near and distant future, He, who, a breath before, had anticipated the hour when He should come amidst the clouds of Heaven, to judge all nations; attended by all the angels, and robed in the splendours of the Godhead; was once more the calm, lowly Teacher and Friend, climbing the slope with His handful of followers, on the way to the well-loved cottage at Bethany.

As they went, He once more broke to those around Him His approaching fate. "You know," said He, "that after two days is the Passover, and that the Son of Man is appointed, by the eternal counsels of God, to be delivered over to His enemies, to be crucified." It was the second time He had expressly used that word of unspeakable degradation and infamy, to men of His day—The Cross. But though they heard it again, they could not even yet realize so disastrous an eclipse of their cherished dreams.

Meanwhile, His enemies were not idle. It was now Tuesday evening, and nothing alarming had followed the popular demonstration of the preceding Sunday. The multitude, indeed, disappointed by seeing no signs of the national movement they had expected that day to inaugurate, had lost their enthusiasm, and, in many cases, grown even hostile. There was less to fear than the authorities had apprehended. Yet, the crowd was fickle, and thousands of Galilæans, the countrymen of Jesus, were at the feast, which was always so restless a time that the Roman Procurator kept a double garrison in Antonia while it lasted, and himself exchanged the congenial society of Cæsarea for

Jerusalem, with its hated bigotry and muffled treason. Even the governor-general of the Province sometimes indeed thought it worth his while to be present.[5] The fiery Galilæans might rise if Jesus were apprehended during the feast-week, and any tumult would be certain to bring severe measures, at the hand of the Romans, on the community at large.

The heads of the priesthood and of the Rabbis, were hence in a difficulty, and met to consult on the wisest course. The acting high priest, Joseph, known among the people as "Caiaphas," "the Oppressor,"[6] was the soul of the movement against Jesus—for his memorable words, "Why not this one man die, rather than the nation perish?" had first given definite expression and formal sanction, to the idea of putting him to death. Throwing all his official dignity into the plot, he put the upper court of his palace, in the upper city, at the disposal of those engaged in it, and there they and he met, to consult how they might get the Hated One into their power without the knowledge of the people, in order to hand Him over to the Romans for crucifixion, without fear of a rescue. The meeting could not, however, come to any fixed plan, for fear of a popular rising. No more could be done than watch, and take advantage of the course of events.

While murder was thus being discussed in the halls of the primate, peace and sacred friendship reigned in the pleasant home at Bethany.[7] The house of Simon, once a leper, but cured by Jesus; now the abode of Martha, perhaps his widow, perhaps his daughter; of Mary, her sister, and of Lazarus, so strangely brought back from the unseen world—the one man raised from the dead of whose second earthly life we know any incident—was a scene of tender respect and loving homage. To do Jesus honour, the family had made a supper for Him, with invited guests, and Lazarus reclined with Him on the table-couch. The company consisted, doubtless, as in the case of the little household itself, of such as owed their health, perhaps their life, or that of some friend, to the Great Healer, and of His immediate followers.

[5] Jos. Ant. xvii. 8.4; xviii. 2.2; xx. 5.3. Bell. Jud. ix. 1.3; ii. 12.1.

[6] Bibel Lex., *Art.* "Kaiaphas." Gesen. Thesaur. *s. v.* כֵּפָה. Buxt. Lex. 1076.

[7] Matt. 26. 1—16. Mark 14. 1—11. Luke 22. 1—6. John 12. 2—8.

It was, in itself, a tender proof of reverent love, that, at such a time, when the life of their guest was sought by the Authorities of the Temple and Schools, and every one was required, on pain of high displeasure, to help them to arrest Him, He should have been thus honoured; for Bethany was close to Jerusalem, and the act might have brought disaster on a household, known, like that of Martha and Mary, to the dominant class.[8] But a still higher tribute was paid Him; touching and delicate, beyond expression, under the circumstances. The sisters had often pondered how they could show their gratitude for all He had been, and all that He had done for them. He had healed Simon, and had given not only him, but the sisters and their brother, the hope of Heaven, by winning their souls to Himself, and, but now, He had shown how truly He was the Messiah,[9] by bringing back Lazarus from the grave. They knew that the shadows of death were gathering over their Mighty Benefactor Himself, for the disciples, doubtless, repeated to them the depressing intimations He had given them. Mary was left to give their love and gratitude expression.

[8] John 11. 33.

[9] John 11 27.

It was common to anoint the heads of the Rabbis who attended marriage feasts, with fragrant oil, and special guests were sometimes similarly honoured. Jesus Himself, at an earlier date, had had even His feet anointed by a grateful penitent, who had, besides, washed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hair, flowing loose, in self-forgetfulness. But now, Mary outdid all former honour paid Him. The costliest anointing oil of antiquity was the pure spikenard, drawn from an Indian plant, and exposed in flasks of alabaster for sale throughout the Roman Empire, where it fetched a price that put it beyond any but the wealthy.

Of this Mary had bought a flask, containing about twelve ounces weight, and now, coming behind the guests as they reclined, opened the seal, and poured some of the perfume, first on the head and then on the feet of Jesus, drying them, presently, with the hair of her head, like her predecessor. She had rendered a tribute than which she

could have given no higher to a King; but it was a worthy symbol of the rightful devotion of all we have and are, to Christ, and, as such, was lovingly accepted by Him. The act, however, raised different thoughts in some of the narrow minds around. As the fragrant odours filled the room, voices were heard muttering that such lavish expense for such an object was wrong. "This ointment," said one, "should have been sold for three hundred pence,[a] and given to the poor. That would have been a worthy act; but this!" It was Judas Iscariot.

With that perfect gentleness and repose which He always showed in such circumstances, the answer of Jesus showed no resentment, to hurt the feelings of any, but yet must have carried joy to the tender heart that had felt her highest offering too little to bestow on such a guest.

"Why do you blame and trouble her?" said He to the company, especially to Judas. "Let her alone. It is a good deed she has done in my honour. You have the poor with you always, and you can never want an opportunity of showing kindness to them, if you wish. But you have not me always with you. Mary, as if she knew I was soon to die, has chosen the strongest way she could of showing how much she loved me. She has done for me, as her Teacher, Messiah, and Friend, while I still live, what she would soon have had to do to my dead body—she has embalmed me for the grave. What remains will do for the day of my burial. I tell you, wherever the gospel shall be preached in the whole world, what she has done will also be told for a memorial of her."

Judas, the only southern Jew among the Twelve—the only man brought up, as it were, under the shadow of the Temple—must have listened to such praise of an act so hateful to him with the bitterest feelings. He had been with Jesus at least from the first appointment of the Apostles, and must, even then, have been conspicuous as a disciple. The good seed of Christ's words had sprung up in those early days in his heart, as in those of the others; but the evil, also, small and unnoticed, perhaps, at first, had been let spring up erelong, and it had grown to rank

strength that slowly choked all else. Like all his brethren, he had cherished gross and selfish views of the prospects to be opened for them by their Master. If some of them were to be the high officials in the expected World-Monarchy, he had trusted to get, at least, some post; profitable, if less splendid. Indeed, the lowest dignity promised inconceivable honour, for were not all the Twelve to sit on thrones to judge the Twelve Tribes of Israel? In the minds of the others, the dream was loyally subordinated to love and duty to the Master: in his, self seized and held, abidingly, the first place. The mildew of his soul had spread apace. Trusted with the common purse of the brotherhood, into which passed the gifts of friends, to meet the humble expenses of each day, the honour, sought at first, perhaps in all uprightness, became a fatal snare. His religion withered apace. Once a disciple from honest anxiety, he continued one, in outward form, as an adventurer. Gain became a passion with him, till, under the very eyes of his Master, he embezzled, as treasurer, the petty funds in his hands.

The entry to Jerusalem had kindled his hopes, after many chagrins and disappointments, for the popular excitement promised to force on Jesus the part of a National Messiah. But, blind, as he must have thought Him, to His own interest, He had made no use of the splendid opportunity. Instead of allying Himself with the dignitaries of Judaism, and inaugurating a mighty Jewish uprising, with high priests and chief Rabbis as His supporters, He had assailed both Temple and School, and proceeded to open rupture with them. Instead of a crown, He had spoken of a cross: instead of honours for His followers, He had foretold persecutions and martyrdom. To the mean and sordid heart of Judas, the bounty of Mary had sufficed to kindle smouldering resentment and disloyalty to a flame. If ruin were certain, he would profit, if he could, before all was over. If Jesus must fall into the hands of His enemies, he might as well get money by what was unavoidable. Had not He, argued the diseased spirit, disappointed him: led him about, for years, in hopes of gain in the end: and had He not, now, told him that the only inheritance he could

CHAP. LVIII.

expect was poverty and suffering? He would go to the high priests, and see what could be done.

Stealing out, therefore, with guilty thoughts, from the quiet cottage, perhaps when they and Bethany had sunk in sleep:—unmoved by the divine love and purity of his Master; forgetful, in the blindness of his evil excitement, of all he had seen and heard, through the last three eventful years, he made his way, in the darkness of night, to the Temple. The watch was at its post at the gates, and on its rounds, but Judas found means to reveal his object to the captain in charge, and was admitted. The officers hastily gathered round to learn why the stranger thus disturbed the night. "I come to betray Jesus of Nazareth," muttered Judas. "He had better be taken to the chief priests," replied those round. Some of the council were hastily summoned forthwith, and received his overtures with a joy that brightened their faces, even by the dull light of the night-lamps,—for it was clear that a cause so righteous as as that of the Galilæan, could never give them open and honest grounds for His arrest. Treason must come to their aid, from within. So they bargained with him; meanly enough, indeed; for they offered for his villany, if successful, only thirty shekels of the Sanctuary,[10]—the price of a slave. But the covetousness of an Oriental was fascinated even by so paltry a bribe. He sold himself as their tool, and from that time sought a good opportunity to betray Jesus, when the people were not round Him.

[10] Jos. Ant. iii. 8. 2. About 2s. 6d. each.

The next day,[11] our Thursday, was the fourteenth of Nisan—the day on which all labour ceased. All leaven had been removed from every house before noon, in preparation for the Passover in the evening. Towards sunset, the Passover lamb was killed in the forecourts of the Temple, by any one chosen to do so, and the blood and fat burned on the altar as an offering to God. The rest supplied the materials for the feast, an hour or two later, after the beginning of the fifteenth day, at sunset. The fourteenth was, therefore, very busy for the whole of Jerusalem; for both it; the villages round it, and the open country, were filled with countless thousands, all intent on the same observances.

[11] Wednesday at sunset to Thursday at sunset. April 4—5. (Nisan 14th.)

The Passover[12] had been founded to commemorate the departure from Egypt, but its time permitted the union with it of the feast of first-fruits, to celebrate the opening harvest, and it was also called, from rites connected with it, the feast of unleavened bread.[13]

[12] Matt 26. 17—19. Mark 14. 12—16. Luke 22. 7—13.

[13] Buxtorf, 1,765, 2nd col.

We are not told how Jesus spent Wednesday, for the supper in the home at Bethany was on Tuesday evening. He apparently stayed in privacy, awaiting the coming day.

On Thursday morning the disciples, taking it for granted that He would celebrate the feast with them, came to Him early to receive instructions. Would He keep it, as He legally might, in Bethany, for the village was counted by the Rabbis part of Jerusalem, for religious usages; and the lamb might be eaten in Bethany, though it must be killed at the Temple.[14] It had already been bought on the tenth Nisan, according to the rule of the Law,[15] for though the strict enforcement of this command was not maintained, Jesus was careful to fulfil all the innocent duties prescribed.

[14] Lightfoot, *in loc.*

[15] Exod. 12. 3.

No doubt the disciples expected that Bethany would be chosen, for He had solemnly turned away from Jerusalem, two days before, and to go thither again would be to put Himself in the power of His enemies. But He had resolved to visit the city so dear to Him once more. It was the place appointed by the Law for the feast, and He would there be in the midst of the rejoicing multitudes, as Himself a son of Israel. He wished, also, to throw a greater sacredness over the institution He designed to inaugurate that night, as the equivalent in the New Kingdom of God, of the Passover in the Old. It was well to link it in the minds of the Apostles with the sacredness of the Temple, under whose shadow; the City of the Great King, in whose bounds; and the gathering of Israel, in whose midst, it was founded.

Turning, therefore, to Peter and John, His usual messengers, He told them to go and prepare the Passover, that He and the Twelve might eat it together. "On entering the city," said He, "you will meet a man bearing an earthen jar of water; follow him into the house he enters, ask for the master, and say, 'THE TEACHER told us to ask you "Where

CHAP. LVIII.

is the room intended for me, in which to eat the Passover with my disciples?"' And he will himself show you his guest-chamber, on the upper floor, provided with couches, ready for us. Get the supper prepared for us there."

The two started at once, and found everything as Jesus had said, and by evening all was in readiness to receive Him and the Ten. Who it was that thus entertained Him is not told us. It may have been John Mark,[16] or, perhaps, Joseph of Arimathea, the early scholar, and the friend after death. The Gospels do not say, and even tradition is silent. Universal hospitality prevailed in this matter, and the only recompense that could be given was the skin of the paschal lamb, and the earthen dishes used at the meal.[17] Not fewer than ten, but often as many as twenty—enough, in any case, to consume the entire lamb—could sit down together, but Jesus wished to have none but His closest circle with Him, that He might bid them a final, tender farewell. Women were not commonly present,[18] and, indeed, were excluded by many; but, apart from this, the evening was designed as a time of deepest communion with the trusted Twelve alone, and, hence, neither the outer circle of disciples, nor the ministering women who had lovingly followed Him from Galilee, were invited.

Peter and John had had much to do beforehand. It may be, the lamb was yet to be bought, that morning, for its purchase on the tenth had fallen rather out of use. They had to choose, from the countless pens in which the victims were offered for sale, a male lamb, of a year old, without blemish of any kind. In Galilee, no secular work was done all day, but, at Jerusalem, it ceased only at noon. About two, the blast of horns announced that the priests and Levites in the Temple were ready, and the gates of the inner courts were opened, that all might bring their lambs for examination, and might satisfy the priests as to the number intending to consume each. Forthwith, the long lines of household fathers, servants, disciples of the Rabbis, and, among the rest, the two deputed by Jesus, pressed across the court of the men, which was gaily tapestried and adorned, to the gate of the priests' court; the lamb

[16] Acts 12. 12. Lichtenstein, Leben Jesu, 394. Ewald, *in loc.*

[17] Bab. Jom. 12. 1. Megill. 26. 1

[18] Lightfoot, *in loc.*

on their shoulders, with a knife stuck in the wool, or tied to the horn.

About half-past two, the evening offering was killed, and about an hour after, it was laid on the great altar. Forthwith, three blasts of the trumpets of the priests, and the choral singing of the great Hallel by the Levites, gave the signal for the slaughter of the Passover lambs, which had to be finished between the hours of three and five. As many offerers were admitted as the courts would hold, and then the gates were shut. Heads of families, or servants deputed by them, killed the lambs, and the priests, in two long rows, with great silver and gold vessels of curious shape, caught the blood, and passed it to others behind, till it reached the altar, at the foot of which it was poured out.[19] The victims, hung on the iron hooks of the walls and pillars of the courts, or on a stick between the shoulders of two men, were then skinned, and cut open; the tail, the fat, the kidneys, and liver, set apart for the altar; the rest wrapped in the skin, and carried home from the Temple, towards evening. As the new day opened, at sunset, the carcass was trussed for roasting, with two skewers of pomegranate wood, so that they formed a cross in the lamb. It was then put in an earthen oven of a special kind, resting, without bottom, on the ground, and was roasted in the earth. The feast could begin immediately after the setting of the sun, and the appearing of the stars, on the opening of the fifteenth of Nisan, which was proclaimed by new trumpet blasts from the Temple.[20]

Judas had stolen back to Bethany before daylight, that his absence might not be missed, and, after another day's bitter hypocrisy, under the burning eyes of his Master, followed Him, with the other Apostles, to Jerusalem, in the evening. They must have breathed heavily in the troubled air, for presentiments of unknown dangers filled every heart. They still clung to their old dream of a visible earthly kingdom of God, under their Master, but their spirits must have sunk within them as they passed through the vast multitudes, wholly absorbed in the approaching feast, with no sign of preparation for a national Messianic movement; and

[19] Lightfoot, ii. 342.

[20] Keim, iii. 256. For the Samaritan Passover at this day, see Stanley's Jewish Church, i 513.

along the illuminated streets, in which no one took notice of them. That the hierarchy had denounced Jesus, was, itself, enough to fill their simple minds with dismay, for its splendour and power seemed reflected in the millions assembled from the whole world, to honour the faith and the Temple, of which they were the public representatives. And was not the tiara worn by a fierce Sadducee? were not the governing families exclusively of this cruel and inhuman party? As they passed under the shadow of the Temple, with its gleaming lights, its marble bastions, and its immemorial traditions, they must have felt, that, unless Jesus chose at last to do what He had never yet done, even for a moment—unless He used His supernatural power in self-defence, and for self-aggrandisement, they were hopelessly lost.

To Jesus Himself the moment was unspeakably solemn. His scarcely founded Kingdom was about to pass through the severest trial. The temporary and earthly in it were to be violently separated, for ever, from the heavenly and eternal. All hopes of a worldly kingdom, so deeply rooted in the minds of His followers, were to be destroyed, and He, the visible Head of the Kingdom, to be apprehended, dis honoured, and crucified. The thoughts of His disciples were to be raised from the idea of a present, incarnate Messiah, to a Messiah in heaven; to appear, henceforth, no more, but by His return from the invisible world. To be true to Him, meant, from this time, the realization of a spiritual conception as yet unattained by even the most enlightened of the Twelve.

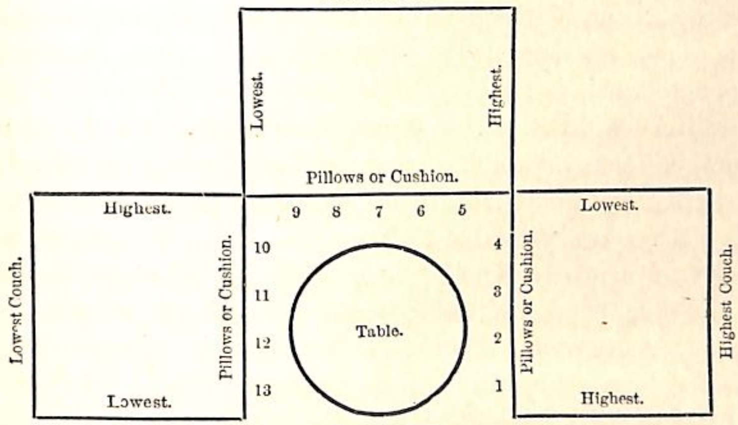
But Christ was in no degree turned aside, or paralyzed in His resolution, by such dangers. While in no sense courting death, and even wishful, if it pleased His Father, to escape its attendant horrors, He moved towards the appointed and foreseen end, with sublime self-possession, and holy peace of soul, recognizing all that yet remained for Him to do, and doing it with a divine serenity. His bearing to the great world, to the last; His action and His self-restraint, are, alike, wonderful; but it must strike us still more, as we observe it closely, how He bore Himself in

the circle of His chosen ones as the catastrophe pressed nearer and nearer.

When the Twelve, with their Master, had entered the room, to take their places on the cushions, for the meal,[21] the greatness of the change yet to be wrought on their minds was once more strikingly shown. In spite of all He had said, the question of precedence was uppermost in their thoughts.

21 Matt. 26. 20. Mark 14. 17. Luke 22. 14—18, 24—30. John 13. 1—20.

As the head of the group, Jesus naturally took the first place on the highest couch—the outermost, on the right of the hollow square;—His face towards the second place;




TRICLINIUM.[22]

22 Dict. of Antiquities, *Art.* "Triclinium."

His feet outwards. Resting His left elbow and side on a cushion the whole breadth of the couch, His right hand was thus free, while the Apostle next Him reclined so that his head lay, as it were, in his Master's bosom. It had been the custom, in ancient times, to eat the Passover standing, but the Rabbis had changed it for the Gentile practice of reclining. It was like slaves, they said, to eat standing, and as Israel was not a race of slaves but of free men, they should eat the feast reclining; a flattery so pleasing to Jewish pride that even the poorest adopted the new mode.[23]

23 Hier. Pes. 37. xxxvii. 2; x. 1. Wetstein, 517.

But this Jewish pride in the Apostles, made still more fierce by selfish ambition, in prospect of the political glory they still perversely hoped for, could ill brook to take a lower place than others. It was a grave matter for them,

CHAP. LVIII. as for the Pharisees, who should have the higher seats. for, in their delusion, they assumed that it might affect their future position in the Messianic State, to be founded, as they dreamed, presently. So the strife that had broken out on the other side of Jericho, once more distressed their Master, and He could only still it by repeating the keen rebuke He then gave them. "In my kingdom," said He, "to be humble is to be great: the lowliest is, in it, the highest." No more was needed; the struggle, now, would rather be for the lowest place.

But He did not confine Himself to words. Rising from the couch, when the supper was just about to begin,[b] and girding Himself with a towel, like a slave, after laying aside His upper garments, He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples. Pride and selfish ambition could not be more strikingly and touchingly reproved, than by such an act on the part of One who knew that He had had all things given into His hands by God His Father, and that He had come forth from Him, and was about to return to Him. No greater proof could be shown of His love, than that such an act of humility should be its natural expression. Had they all been true-hearted, it would have been amazing in One so transcendently above them, but it was still more so, when He knew that one of them was already a traitor. He had proclaimed Himself the Son of God, the future judge of the world, the Messiah in whose gift were the honours of heaven, and whose voice was to raise the dead, and they were simple Galilæan fishermen. There could be no commentary on His demand for lowliness, as the true ground of advancement in His kingdom, more vivid than His voluntarily performing the lowliest act of personal service to them all.

He seems to have begun with Simon Peter, His chief Apostle, but the warm heart and the impulsive nature of the rock-like man shrank from letting his Master humble Himself thus. "Lord," said he, "dost *Thou* wash *my* feet!" He had not realized the meaning of an act intended as symbolical. "What I do," replied Jesus, "thou understandest not now, but wilt know hereafter." "*Thou* shalt never wash *my*

feet, Lord," reiterated the Apostle. "If I do not wash thee," said Jesus, "thou hast no part with me." "Lord, if that be the case," broke out Peter, "wash not my feet only, but my hands and my head." "It is not necessary," said Jesus. "He who, according to Jewish ways, has taken a bath before his meal, needs no more than to cleanse the dust from his feet, which has clung to them on the way from the bath. Except this, he is clean, and it is the same with you, except him who intends to betray me. By my word, which I have spoken to you, and the faith waked in you by it,[24] you are already clean in the sense I mean—right in the desire of your heart towards me. Yet, though thus clean, the dust of earth still clings to you in part, and makes a last washing needful." The hour was at hand for this last crowning act of love—the shedding His blood for them for the remission of their sins—and He would now prepare them for it by this tender symbol,[25] for it taught not only humility, but that He alone could take away sin.

[24] Ch. 15.3; 3.18

[25] *Art.* "Fusswaschung," Bibel Lex.

Having washed their feet and resumed His garments, He once more took His place on the couch.

"Do you know," He asked, as He did so, "the meaning of what I have now done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for I am both. Learn, then, that, if I, your Master and Lord, wash your feet, you, also, ought to wash one another's feet, for I have done this as an example to you, that you should do to each other as I have done to you. You know, and I would have you remember it, that a servant is not greater than his lord, nor an apostle than He who sent him forth, so that you may well imitate me, your superior, in my humility. If you understand what I say, it will be well for you if you act on my teaching. I do not, indeed, speak of you all. I know your characters and hearts, but all has happened in fulfilment of the divine will, for the Scripture must needs be fulfilled, which says, 'He that eats bread with me, craftily lifts up his heel against me;' to trip and overthrow me.[26] I tell you before it happen, that, when it does take place, you may believe that I am indeed the Messiah, and that no other is to be expected. That I should be betrayed by one of yourselves might have

[26] Ps. 41. 9

CHAP. LVIII.

shaken your faith in me, but it cannot do so when I have foreseen and foretold it, as part of the counsel of God. But to cheer and encourage you in your faithfulness, let me tell you that you may go forth to the mission on which I have sent you, with joyful hearts. Your high position, as my apostles, remains unaffected by the treachery of one of your number. For, as I have said before, I now solemnly repeat —he who receives you is accounted by me as if he had received myself, and he who receives me receives God the Father who sent me, for He dwells in me, and I in Him."[27]

[27] John 14. 10, 20; 13. 20.

The supper now began, but the spirit of Jesus was still clouded and troubled by the presence of the traitor.[28] At last His feelings broke out into irrepressible words. "Verily, verily," said He, "one of you, who eat with me, will betray me. His hand is with me on the table." They had never hitherto realized His hints, and the very thought of treason, to their honest and faithful hearts, was almost beyond belief. They could not think who was meant, for Judas had managed, by his hypocrisy, to hide his character from them all. One by one, they began to ask, "Lord, is it I?" "It is one," replied Jesus, "who dips with me into the dish. The Son of Man, indeed, goes in this way by the counsels of God, from this world, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed! It would have been well for him if he had not been born!" Words thus general only increased the pain and emotion of all. At last, Peter, not venturing to ask directly who it could be, but conscious of his own integrity, beckoned to John, who lay next our Lord, to ask Him who could be so base. "It is he," whispered Jesus, "who is just about to dip the bitter herbs into this charoseth with me, and to whom I shall give some of it presently."[c]

[28] Matt. 26. 21—25. Mark 14. 18—21. Luke 22. 21—23. John 13. 21—35.

He then dipped the piece of bread into the charoseth, and handed it to Judas. "Is it I?" asked the guilty man, conscience-stricken, and yet unmelted. He had not heard the words of John, but his guilty soul could not help stammering out the question, in a vain attempt to keep up the mockery of true-heartedness he had acted so long. The awful reply—that "it was"—tore away the mask at once, and unveiled his heart. That all was known would have

overwhelmed some, in shame and contrition, but it only hardened the betrayer. The wild madness of evil was on him for the time. He could think only of himself: his fancied wrongs; his full resolve. Satan had entered his soul, and bent his whole nature to his own dark ends. It may be that the exposure roused him to the heedlessness of despair, as when the arch enemy bade hope farewell,

> " and, with hope, farewell fear,
> Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
> Evil, be thou my good!"[29]

[29] Par. Lost, iv. 108—110.

It was vain for him to seek to hide the workings of his soul by an affected outward calm. He had long veiled falsehood

> " under saintly show,
> Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge."

But the eyes of his Master shone into the depths of his being, and saw the tumult of his worst passions, in their mastery. "What you have to do," said Jesus, "do quickly." He could not breathe freely till the miserable man had left, and besides, He would fain meet the inevitable as soon as might be, for the slow advance of a catastrophe is harder to bear than the catastrophe itself. Judas knew the meaning of the command at once, and, having received the piece of bread, dipped in the charoseth, moodily took it, and silently withdrew into the outer night. The Eleven were too much confused to realize the end as at all so near. Betrayal might come, but at some future, perhaps distant, time. They only fancied, therefore, that Judas had left either to buy what might be needed during the week of the feast, or for that special night; or that Jesus had bethought Himself of some deed of mercy to the poor, and sent him to carry it out. The traitor gone, Christ felt free to speak, and, as if relieved of a load, broke out into a joyful anticipation of His fast-coming triumph. In the near vision of the Cross, His work seemed already finished;[30] His glory, as conqueror of Death and Hell, and Redeemer of Mankind, attained, and that of God the Father illustrated.

[30] John 13. 26—37

"Now," said He, in effect, "the Son of Man is already glorified. All things are hastening to His triumph, and, in that triumph, God Himself will also be glorified, for it is

CHAP. LVIII

His work which I shall presently complete. And, if God be thus glorified in my death for the salvation of man, He will assuredly crown me with His own heavenly glory, when I return to Him: the glory that I had with Him, before I came to earth to become man, and that, even now, is close at hand, through my death, which will usher me into it. The betrayer has gone to accomplish it![31]

[31] Ch. 17. 5.

"My children, for I call you so in love, I shall be only a little while longer with you, and you will feel the want of my presence, and wish for me; but, as I once said to my enemies, I shall be where you cannot follow and find me. For a parting word, let me give you a last command,—my very last: a new command, to be kept, as such, so much the more;—that, henceforth, ye love each other because I have loved you all, and because you all love me. I have often, before, told you to love all men, and so be like God, but I now tell you to do so, for the love I bear to you, and for that which you bear to me. You must, henceforth, be known as members of my kingdom, by the love you show to each other, as such. And the love you have, as brethren, must be such, and as great, as mine has been towards you all."

As He thus spoke, Peter still dwelt, in his thoughts, on the sad words which seemed to foreshadow a lasting separation between him and His Master. "Lord," said he, in his bold, impetuous way, "You speak of going away; pray tell us whither you are going? Will you leave us and go to the Gentiles?" "I go to a place," replied Jesus, "where you cannot follow me at present, however willing you may be to do so. Yet, do not fear. We shall not be separated for ever. You will, one day, follow me, in the same way, and then you will come to me." Peter's heart could not be silent. "I shall be glad to come to Thee, Lord," said he, "even after a time, but why can I not go with Thee now? Thou knowest me. I am ready to lay down my life for Thee."

"Do you think so?" replied Jesus, with a look full of friendship, and yet also of earnest sadness.[32] "You little know your own heart. All of you will forsake me,

[32] Matt. 26. 31—35. Mark 14. 27—31. Luke 22. 31—38.

and leave me to my enemies this very night, as Zechariah, the prophet, has foretold—'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered abroad.'[33] But be not cast down with too much sorrow. After I have risen from the dead, I will go into Galilee, and gather you round me once more." The idea of forsaking his Master, whom he loved so dearly, was too inconceivable, however, to Peter, in the self-confidence of his affection, to allow him to accept it as possible. "Other men may, perhaps, be offended on account of Thee, Lord," said he, "but if all the world were to be so, there is no fear of my failing. I, at any rate, will never leave Thee."

[33] Ch. 13. 7.

"Simon, Simon," replied Jesus, using the old name by which He had known him long ago—"take care. Self-confidence will be your undoing. Satan has seen it, and has sought to get God to give you over into his power, as he once did Job, and he has got you for the time, to sift you as wheat is sifted. He would fain have it that your professions are only chaff, and he will shake and test you by temptations, dangers, and troubles, to try to make you turn against me, and thus prove that it is so. But I am mightier than your enemy, and I have prayed for you that, though you fall, you may rise again, and that your faith in me may not give way altogether, and separate you entirely from me. Though you will assuredly fall, yet you will repent, and when you have done so, see that you strengthen the faith of your fellow-disciples, and become their helper, to support and confirm them, if they, like you, waver."

Peter was sorely distressed at such words. Conscious of his honest love and fidelity, it seemed as if Jesus doubted both. His warm Galilæan heart was full. He felt as if his Master spoke of his acting in a way of which he could not believe himself capable. "Lord," said he, "I care not what happens to Thee. I am ready to go with Thee to prison, or to die with Thee, but I will never leave Thee, nor be untrue to Thee." "Do you think so, Peter?" replied Jesus, with a voice full of tenderness—"I tell you that this very night, before the cock crow the second

CHAP. LVIII. time, you will thrice deny that you know me." "If I were to die for it," answered the Apostle, "no one will ever hear me deny Thee." "I can say the same," added all the other Apostles.

There was now a pause for a short time in the conversation. Presently Jesus re-commenced it. "You may wonder at my speaking as I have done to-night," said He, "but there are good grounds for it.[34] Your circumstances will be entirely different, henceforth, from what they have been in the past. A time of care and struggle lies before you. When I sent you to travel through the country, preaching the Kingdom, and you had neither purse, nor bag for food, nor sandals,—did you miss any of these, or want for anything?" "Nothing, Lord," said all the Eleven. "It will be very different now," replied Jesus. "Whoever has money, let him take it, and let him take provisions for the way, as well; and let him that has no sword sell his coat to buy one, to defend himself. He who has money and provisions can help himself on by them in his journeys, but he who has none will need to ask hospitality, and, as he needs not hope to receive it, let him, at least, have the means of protection. I speak in a figure, for I do not really mean you to fight, or to carry or use a sword, but I wish to impress on you how hostile the world will, henceforth, be to you, as you go on your journeys as my apostles; and what earnest energy and struggle will be needful, on your part, while you are thus carrying the news of the Kingdom through the world. For I tell you, solemnly, that the words of Isaiah, 'And He was reckoned among transgressors,' must be fulfilled in me, for that which has been written of me in Scripture is about to be accomplished."[35]

[34] Luke 22. 35—38.

[35] Ch 53. 12.

The disciples, always ready to understand whatever they heard, in the most material sense, had failed to catch the real meaning of Jesus in His reference to the sword. They fancied that He wished them to provide weapons to resist approaching danger. "We have two swords," said one of them. "That will do," replied Jesus, gently avoiding further explanation. "You will not need more than the two,"—a touch of sad irony which sufficed to show even

then that He had thought of something very different as their defence than the purchase of arms; for how were the nine, who had no swords at all, to protect themselves, when scattered on the apostolic journeys of which He had spoken?

The evening was now somewhat advanced, according to Eastern notions, but the Passover meal, in its different rites, could not be hurried. The feast began thus, in other circles, though we cannot tell how far the usual customs were followed by Jesus.[36] A cup of red wine, mingled with a fourth part of water, to make it a pleasant and temperate drink, was filled by one of the company, and given to the head of the family, who took it in his right hand, as he rested, supporting himself on his left side and arm, and thanked God in the words—"Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, Thou King of the world, who createdst the fruit of the vine." He then tasted the cup, and passed it round. Thanks for the institution of the washing of hands followed, and then the washing itself, which was merely formal. "Bitter" herbs, such as endives, lettuce, and the like, were next set on the table, to represent the hard life of Egypt. Thanks were given for them also, and then they were passed round and eaten, after dipping them in a mixture of salt and vinegar. The unleavened bread—the bread of affliction—which gave one of its names to the feast, followed next, and then the bowl of charoseth and the Passover lamb. After this, the head of the company once more gave thanks to Him "who created the fruit of the earth," and the bitter herbs were dipped by each in the charoseth, and a piece of it, "the size of an olive," eaten, with them, by all. A second single cup of wine, mingled with water, was now poured out, discourse on the lessons of the feast was held, and then the hundred and thirteenth and hundred and fourteenth Psalms, part of the Hallel, were sung. Another short thanksgiving followed, and the cup was once more passed round and tasted.

[36] Matt. 26. 26—29. Mark 14. 22—25. Luke 22. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 11. 23—25.

The household father now washed his hands again, and then took two of the unleavened cakes, broke one in two, and laying the pieces on the unbroken cake, pronounced a thanksgiving—"Blessed be He who makes bread to grow

 from the earth,"—wrapped some bitter herbs round a piece of the broken bread, dipped it in the charoseth, ate it, after another special thanksgiving, and, with it, a part of the lamb; the others following his example. The supper had only now properly begun. Each ate and drank at his will; all, alike, in the patriarchal way of the East, lifting what they wished, with their fingers, from the common dish. A third cup of wine, passed round, marked the close of the feast as a religious solemnity.

The meal had advanced thus far, and was now virtually finished, when the warning had been given of the approaching denial of their Master by Peter, and the weak-minded desertion of the Eleven. The solemn words, foretelling the dangers and trials before them, had been added, when Jesus, now in the bosom of the little band, nearest and dearest to Him on earth; His companions through the past years, since His public work began—introduced by an act befitting a spiritual religion like His, in its simplicity, the Institution which, henceforth, should supersede in His kingdom on earth the feast they had ended. Homage had been paid for the last time, as in farewell, to the Past: they were, hereafter, to honour the new Symbol of the Future.

He was about to leave them, and, as yet, they had no rite, however simple, to form a centre round which they might permanently gather. Some emblem was needed, by which they might, hereafter, be distinguished: some common bond, which should outwardly link them to each other, and to their common Master. The Passover had been the symbol of the theocracy of the past, and had given the people of God an outward, ever-recurring, remembrance of their relations to each other, and their invisible King. As the founder of the New Israel, Jesus would now institute a special rite for its members, in all ages and countries. The Old Covenant of God with the Jew had found its vivid embodiment in the yearly festivity He had that night, for the last time, observed. The New Covenant must, henceforth, have an outward embodiment also; more spiritual, as became it, but equally vivid.

Nothing could have been more touching and beautiful in

its simplicity than the symbol now introduced. The Third Cup was known as "the cup of blessing," and had marked the close of the meal, held to do honour to the economy now passing away. The bread had been handed round with the words, "This is the bread of affliction:" and the flesh of the lamb had been distributed with the words, "This is the body of the Passover."[37] The feast of the Ancient People of God having been honoured by these striking utterances,[38] —Jesus took one of the loaves or cakes before Him, gave thanks, broke it, and handed it to the Apostles with words, the repetition, almost exactly, of those they had heard a moment before—"Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." Then, taking the cup, which had been filled for the fourth and last handing round, He gave thanks to God once more, and passed it to the circle, with the words, "Drink ye all of it, for this cup is the New Covenant" presently to be made "in my blood;" instead of the covenant made also in blood, by God, with your fathers: "it is," in abiding symbol, "my blood of the Covenant" of my Father, with the New Israel, "which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. This do, as often as ye drink, in remembrance of Me."[39]

[37] Mischna Pesachim, last chapter, § 3.

[38] 1 Cor. 11. 25.

[39] Exod. 24. 8.

For Himself, He declined to taste it. "I will not drink, henceforth," said He, "of the fruit of the vine—for it was still only wine—till that day, when, at the end of all things, the kingdom of God, which I have founded, shall finally triumph, and my followers be gathered to the great heavenly feast. Then, I shall drink it new, with you and them."

Such, and so simple, was the new rite of the Spiritual Theocracy. To those around Him, at its institution, there could be no doubt of its meaning and nature, for it was, even in words, a counterpart of that which He had superseded, with a purer and more spiritual form. The cup, He told them, was a symbol of the New Covenant, under which, as His followers, they had come; in distinction from that which they had left, for His sake. It was to be a memorial of Him, and a constant recognition of their faith in the virtue of His atoning death—that death, whose shed blood was the seal of this New Covenant between the subjects of His kingdom,

CHAP. LVIII. and God, His Father. It symbolized before all ages, to the New Israel, the cardinal virtue of His death. The Apostles could have had no simpler or more unmistakable intimation that as the blood of the Passover lamb redeemed the people of God, of old, from the sword of the angel of wrath, His blood would be a ransom for man, from far deadlier peril. A covenant, to them, implied a sacrifice, and His blood, as the New Covenant, was, therefore, sacrificial: the blood of a Covenant which pledged His followers to faith, and duty; the blood of a new paschal lamb, with which His disciples must, in figure, be sprinkled, that the destroying angel might pass over them, in the day of judgment. The custom of the nation to make a common meal the special occasion of religious fellowship, made the new institution easy and natural to the Apostles, and the constant use of symbols in their hereditary religion prevented their misconceiving the meaning of those now introduced for the first time. They saw in it an abiding memorial of their Lord: a vivid enforcement of their dependence on the merits of His death, as a sacrifice for their salvation: the need of intimate spiritual communion with Him, as the bread of life: and the bond of the new brotherhood He had established. The joint commemoration of His broken body and shed blood, was, henceforth, to distinguish the assemblies of His followers from the world at large. Excepting baptism, it was the one outward form in the Society, established by their Master.

From a rite thus simple, doctrines have been developed by theological zeal and heated fancy, which would have alike startled and shocked those who first partook of it. It has been forgotten how Jesus, Himself, in answer to the cavil—"How can He give us His flesh to eat?" repudiated the literalism which caught at sound, and missed the sense. "My flesh—my bodily person," said He, "profiteth nothing towards procuring eternal life: to talk of eating it to gain that life is unworthy trifling: it is the Spirit who quickens the soul to a new, immortal, and heavenly existence, and that Spirit acts through the words of sacred truth which I speak to you. *They* are spirit, and they are life."[40]

[40] John 6. 63.

## CHAPTER LIX.

### THE FAREWELL.

CHAP. LIX.

JERUSALEM was the brightest and happiest of cities on this Passover night.[1] But though the hum of universal rejoicing rose on every side, there was only sadness in the little band round Jesus. One of their number had proved a traitor, and their Master had told them, once more, that He would very soon leave them. They were sore at heart from shame at the baseness of Iscariot; at the dread of losing a Master they passionately loved; and at the utter miscarriage of all their half-worldly, half-religious, expectations of earthly glory. Their Master had instituted a rite to mark them as apart from all other men, but it looked as if there would be little use for it, in the apparently near overthrow of His infant Kingdom.

[1] John 14. 1—31

As they reclined, sad and silent, Jesus read their thoughts, and began to cheer them, by lifting their hearts from the gloomy present to the glorious future.

"Let not your hearts be troubled with care and anxiety in such a way," said He; "believe in God, and in me, His Son, who speak in His name, and let that faith lead you to trust confidently that the promises made you will be fulfilled. I have, indeed, told you that I must go to my Father, but I have told you, also, that I will return. You have, assuredly, nothing to expect on earth except trial, but your reward in the world to come may well raise you above all sorrow on that account. In heaven, my Father's house, are many mansions; you need not fear that everlasting habitations in glory will fail you. If it were not so, I would have told you, for I never deceive you. Nay, more, I am your forerunner thither. If I go away, it is to prepare a place for you. I am

CHAP. LIX.

your friend, going home before you, to get all ready for your glad reception when you follow me.

"Nor is this all; I will return to fetch you to my heavenly home, that, where I am, you may be, also, for ever. If you remember what I have said in the past, you will know not only whither I am going, but, since it is I who prepare a place for you above, and I, and no other, who will come to lead you thither, you must also know the way."

He alluded to His spiritual return at the blissful death of His servants, to guide them to Himself, above, and He had told them, not long before, that He was the door of the great fold, and that if any man entered by Him, he would be saved.[2] But they had forgotten this, as they had so much else.

A full and satisfying answer to the question of Peter,[3] lay in these words. But it was not enough to still the fears and doubts in the minds of the Apostles. They still clung fondly to their earthly hopes of the Messiah's Kingdom, and though they, perhaps, realized the near departure of their Master, they had not, even yet, come to comprehend that it meant His death. Hence His figurative language remained so dark to them, that Thomas, constitutionally given, as he was, to seek clearness and certainty, interrupted Him with a reverent freedom[4]—

"Lord, we do not, as yet, know whither Thou art going, and how can we know the way in which to follow Thee?" The questioner wished to find out the way by learning the goal, but Christ, in His answer, pointed him to the way as revealing all else.

"I myself, and no other, am the way," said He, "because no one comes to the Father, in His heavenly glory, but through me. I am the true way, for I speak only the truth given me from above to make known; the way to life, for he who believes in me shall live by me, and shall have everlasting life, and I shall raise him up at the last day. If ye have known me—the Way—ye will know whither I am going—to my Father—for, since he who sees the Son, sees the Father also, you know Him from this time, and have seen Him, in seeing me. I am the WAY, because no one can

[2] John 10. 7, 9.

[3] John 13. 36.

[4] John 14. 5.

reach my Father's presence, but through faith in me as the Saviour: the Truth, because I am the self-revelation of God; the Light, come into the world, without following which, no one can gain salvation: the Life, because I am the source and spring of eternal life, so that he who does not receive me into his heart, by faith, is already condemned."

Philip had listened,[5] but could not understand. He could only think that Jesus, in speaking of seeing the Father, alluded to some invisible appearance of Jehovah, for the purpose of founding the earthly kingdom of the Messiah. With a child-like simplicity, therefore, he turned to Christ—"Lord, show us the Father, and all our wishes will be satisfied."

No one who had thought over the words "If ye have known me, ye will have known my Father also," and had understood them, could have asked such a question. It marked an amazing want of intelligent appreciation of the teaching of our Lord, and of His mode of speech. Hence, the answer of Christ sounds almost sad. "Have I been so long with you, and do you know so little of me, Philip? If you really knew me, you would not ask me to show you the Father. He cannot be shown to the natural sight. But he who sees me, and rightly understands who I am, knows the Father, in thus knowing me. Such an one realizes that, in me, the highest revelation of God that is possible has appeared, and has no wish to have any higher or other outward and material manifestation of Him. You speak as if you did not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and that hence, as I said, he who sees me sees the Father also. The proof that it is so, is in my words, for they are not my own, but His. If you doubt this, you do not need to believe merely because I say so: believe it on the proof of the works that I do, for it is not I, who do them, but the Father. Put away your gross earthly ideas. What I mean is, that the Father is revealed by the Son, as His image and likeness, but only in a spiritual sense, to the eye of faith and of the soul."

Jesus now turned to the Apostles at large, and resumed His discourse at the point He had left, when, first Thomas, and then Philip, broke in with their questions.[6]

[5] John 14. 8.

[6] John 14. 12.

CHAP. LIX.

"I have promised you eternal life," said He, "if you trust me and my Father. Let me do more, that you may be cheered and supported in your future labours for my Kingdom. I tell you, with all solemnity, that if you have this true faith in me, and love towards me, you will have the power to do just such wonderful works as I have done, and even greater, for I am going to My Father to be raised to all power in heaven and earth; so that you may feel sure that your prayers, as my Apostles, offered in my name, for the advancement of my Kingdom, will be heard and answered, in all their fulness. You will receive power from above to overcome the world by your labours as my Apostles;—to spread the Gospel among all nations, and to triumph over all Jewish and Gentile opposition. I mean this when I speak of your doing greater works than my outward miracles on one here and one there. It is I who will give you this power, for I am in my Father, and my Father is in me, and He works through me, and I shall give it that my Father may be glorified by my triumph; for His glory is the great end of my work, now and hereafter. So mighty, indeed, will be your prayers in my name, as my Apostles, that I will do not only what you ask, for the spread of my Kingdom, but I will do it whenever, and as often as ever, you ask it.

"But if you desire that so great an honour should be granted you, that I should hear and answer all your prayers, you must, above all things, keep my commandments, for by doing so you best show your love for me.

"I know you feel sad at the thought of losing my presence and help, and wonder who will stand by you, and aid you, when I am gone. Be not afraid. I will not leave you alone, but will see that my place be supplied, so that you want for nothing.[7] For I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper and Counsellor, who will not leave you, as I must now do, but will abide with you for ever—protecting, helping, strengthening you, in all your needs; the Spirit of Truth, who imparts the divine Truth to the hearts of men, leads them to know it, and quickens them to all spiritual power. The unbelieving world can-

[7] John 14. 17.

not receive Him, because they have not the inward sight to know Him, and He is not visible to the outward sense. But they cannot comprehend, and will not receive, anything that is not material, and apparent to the bodily eye. You, however, who believe in me, will know Him, for He will remain with you, and will be in you, and your own experience will make you feel that He is so.



"Nor is this all, my dear ones. I will not leave you like orphans;[8] with me, your spiritual Father, gone from you for ever. Not only will you have the Spirit of Truth with you, but I, myself, will shortly return to you. In a very little while longer the world will see me no more, but you will see me, though not bodily present. You will see me in spirit, and feel that I commune with you and work in you, through the Spirit, whom I will send. I shall be alive, though unseen, for I will rise from the dead and live for evermore, and shall make you partakers of my heavenly and deathless life. By this higher spiritual life ye shall know, in that day, when, by the gift of my Spirit, I come to you in power, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.[9] When I come, finally, in outward glory, as I have told you already, at the last day, you will have no more doubts or fears, as you now have, in this time of my lowliness and humiliation. You will then know, when you see me descend in heavenly majesty, as you shall have already felt when I come, very soon, by the Spirit; that my words are true—that I am indeed in my Father, and you in me, and I in you—that we are for ever inseparably one with the Father, and with each other.[10]

"But only he who has my commandments in his heart, and practises them in his life, truly loves me, and will be loved by my Father and by me. To him will I reveal my presence in his soul, by the Spirit through whom I commune with him."

Here, Judas Thaddæus, "the brave," the son of an unknown James, interrupted the discourse by a reverent question.[11] With the simple literal ideas of his age and nation, he could not understand what Jesus had said about manifesting Himself only to individual believers, and not to

[8] John 14. 18

[9] John 14. 19

[10] John 14. 20

[11] John 14. 22

CHAP. LIX.

all men. He still expected a visible appearance of Christ in glory, as the Messiah, to judge the unbelieving world, and set up His own Kingdom. "What has happened, Lord," asked he, "to make Thee determine to show Thyself as the Messiah only to us, and not to the world at large? How comes it?"

"The reason," replied Jesus, "is, that the world, so long as it does not believe in me and love me, is neither morally capable of receiving such a manifestation of me, as I mean—a spiritual communion with the soul—nor worthy of it. Only believing and faithful hearts can become, or desire to become, the abode of my Father or of myself, so that we may live in that loving fellowship with them which reveals Us to them. I do not speak of such an outward and visible dwelling with men as when the divine glory rested between the cherubim, or over the Tabernacle; but an unseen abode, by the Holy Spirit, in the soul as in a Temple. Only he who loves me, and, loving me, keeps my commandments, can have this honour and blessedness.[12] Such an one my Father will love as well as I, and we will come to him and make our abode with him. He who does not love me will not keep my commandments. I call my commandments mine, but, in reality, they are those of my Father who sent me.[13] With such an one, therefore, who rejects God's words and does not obey them, the Father and I cannot make our abode, and, thus, I cannot manifest myself in this spiritual way, of which alone I speak, except to individual souls."

[12] John 14. 23.

[13] John 14. 24.

There was now a short pause, but, after a time, Jesus began again. Glancing back at all He had said to them during the evening, and knowing that much of it must be dark and enigmatical to their simple minds, He lovingly cheered them by some further kind words.

"I have said these things to you, while I am still with you, but I know that you hardly understand some of my sayings, and that you will necessarily forget others. The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, at my request, to be your heavenly Friend and Helper, will, however, throw light on every point, and bring to your vivid remembrance all that I have now told you; giving you a

fuller and wider understanding of the truths I have only briefly opened."

"Fear not, my beloved ones, all will be well with you," added He, for they were sorely troubled. "You know how you wish your friends 'Peace' when you part from them. My farewell greeting is 'Peace be with you'—the peace of reconciliation to God, of eternal salvation in my Kingdom, which I have gained for you as your Saviour. My peace, coming from me, and by me, I leave you; for it will be won for you, as an undying gift, by my death, now so near. This gift—my peace—is of a wholly different kind from that which men wish each other in their farewells—mere earthly joy and prosperity, which leave the soul unblessed. My peace carries with it lasting good, and true unfading happiness, for it is that of the soul.

"As I began, therefore, I shall end—Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, either now or hereafter. Why should it be either? Instead of sadness, you ought to feel joy,[14] for I have told you that, though I go away now, I shall come to you again. Indeed, if you love me, as I know you do, you will be glad to hear me say that I am going back to my Father, for here my Father has used my human weakness to speak His words and do His works, for the salvation of man. The mortal nature I now wear has been His feeble and indirect instrument. But when I return to Him, my Kingdom will be under His direct power. My work, thenceforth, will rest alone, and directly, in His hand, and He will complete what I have begun on earth, by His mighty power, through His Spirit; without human limitation, such as has been inevitable while He wrought through me as the Son of Man—a man like yourselves. He, working with His Almighty power, directly, through His Spirit, is greater, as a help to my Kingdom, than I can be while I act for Him through this dying body.

[14] John 14. 27.

"I have told you now, while I am still with you, that I shall presently leave you, that your faith may not be shaken when I am gone.[15] The hour of my departure approaches: I shall not speak much with you after this. For the prince of this world—the evil one—is already coming against

[15] John 14. 29.

CHAP. LIX.

[16] John 14. 30.

[17] John 15. 1.

[18] Lücke ii. 401.

[19] John 15. 1.

me. But fear not, he has no power over me.[16] There is nothing in my soul which he can assail; no sin by which he can claim me as his. Nor do I need to yield to him in anything, for I could, if I chose, avoid the death with which he threatens me. But, that the world may know my love to the Father, and that I do what He has appointed for me as His will, though it be to die; let us rise now from the table, and go forth to meet the powers of darkness, before whom, according to the counsels of God, I shall fall."

The whole company hereupon rose, and prepared to leave the room.[17] But Jesus, full of thoughts which He longed, even yet, to utter, before His ever nearer separation, stood, as it were, fixed to the spot by His love to them, and once more began to speak.[18] He could not bring Himself to break up this last communion He should have with them.[a]

He began by the well-known and beautiful comparison of Himself and the Apostles to a vine and its branches.[19] Perhaps the thought rose from the sight of the wine-cup on the table and its recent use at the evening's feast, or, perhaps, the house stood amidst vines, and branches may have been trained round the window, or the vineyard itself may have lain below in the bright moonlight.

"This vine, with its branches and fruit," said He, pointing to the wine-cup, or to the vines outside, "is a type, in its earthly and visible way, of a heavenly and divine truth. I am the true vine, ye are the branches, and my Father is the husbandman. He sent me into the world: He has given me such faithful souls as you, and joined you with me, in living fellowship and communion: He has tended the growth of the truth in the past, for it has been He who has been working through me, and He will continue to do so after I leave you, by His Holy Spirit.

"As in the natural vine there are fruitful and unfruitful branches, so, in my fellowship, there are some who bear fruit both in word and in act, and some who do not. Only those who are pure and sincere—those who truly love me and keep my commands, have the abiding communion with me from which such fruitfulness springs; for, as the

careful husbandman cuts off the unfruitful branch, and cleans away with his pruning-knife all that would hinder the full fruitfulness of the good one, so does my Father with my disciples.

"But be ye comforted.[20] You have been pruned and made clean by your loving and obedient reception of the truths I have told you, and by the discipline through which you have passed. Dismiss anxious care! You will not be cut off as unfruitful branches. My Father will make you still more fruitful; will cleanse away all that hinders your progress in grace, and will perfect you in the end. But, to secure this growing fruitfulness, you must cherish fondly your communion with me; grafted into me, as the branches into the stem of the vine. If you do so, I will not separate myself from you, any more than the vine tears itself from its branches, but will strengthen you by my spiritual aid. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself if it do not abide in the vine, you cannot bring forth good fruit[21] except ye abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches;[22] the living power to bear fruit comes only from me. But if you abide in me, you will bear much fruit. All true work as my disciples—all spiritual life—comes only from fellowship with me—fellowship close as that of the vine and its branches—each in the other—for apart from me ye can do nothing. As unfruitful branches are cut off by the husbandman, and cast out of the vineyard and left to dry up, and then gathered and cast into the fire and burned, so, those who break away from living in union with me will be cut off from me here, by my Father; the religious life hence will wither up in them while they live, and at the last day they will suffer the judgment of God.[23] But if ye abide in loving, spiritual union with me, and hold fast my commandments and keep them, you may ask what you will, and it will be done to you, for you will, then, ask, in my name, only such things as are in keeping with my will.[24] And it is a great motive for your abiding in me, that your doing so glorifies my Father by leading to your bearing much fruit, through my answers to your prayers. You will further, by this fulfilment of your prayers, become truly, and in the

[20] John 15. 3.

[21] John 14. 4.

[22] John 14 5.

[23] Matt. 13. 40

[24] John 15. 7

CHAP. LIX. strict sense, my disciples, for the enjoyment of it is the special distinguishing mark of my true disciples only.

"That you may thus continue in living fellowship and spiritual union with me,[25] let me remind you that the uniting bond of this fellowship between me, my Father, and you, is love; and that, on your side, all depends on your showing yourselves true and obedient, in this love to me and in the practice of my commands, as I have shown and still show myself towards my Father and His commands. As He has loved me, I have loved you; see that ye continue henceforth, for ever, to love and obey me, that I may still for ever be able to love you. I have spoken thus, that the same joy which I have in knowing that I abide in my Father's love,[26] may be felt by you, from your knowing that you abide in my love, and that this holy joy of soul may increase, more and more, to a heavenly fulness."

[25] John 15. 9.

[26] John 15. 11.

The sound of the word "love," so dear to the heart of Christ, led Him back to the new commandment [27] He had given a few minutes before. That His disciples should love one another was the true secret of keeping His commandments, and so of retaining their place in His heart, and securing the holy joy of soul He desired for them. He now defined His requirements more narrowly. They were to love each other, as He had loved them, and that meant, He told them, self-sacrifice, even to death, for their sakes.

[27] John 15. 12.

"You wish, I am sure," said He, "to retain my love after I leave you, and will strive to keep my commandments that you may do so. These commandments are summed up in the one which I gave you to-night, already, that ye love one another.[28] I only add, that that love must be such as I have shown and will presently show to you;—love so great, that, in furtherance of the divine purpose for your salvation, I willingly lay down my life for you. There can be none greater between man and man, and this highest example—this joyful sacrifice of life itself for each other—must be your standard Nothing less is the ideal I require in my New Society. That spirit alone which would not shrink from this, makes true and full obedience to my command possible, with all the blessings it brings.

[28] John 15. 12.

"If you thus rise to a love like mine, you will bind me to you in closest undying affection;—affection not as from master to servant, or teacher to disciple, but as of friend to friend. If, by having this love, you do the things I command you, I shall call you my friends, my loved and trusted ones; for doing is the only proof I accept of loving. I know, indeed, that you will, and therefore, henceforth, I call you no longer mere servants, as in the past, but trusted friends.[29] For the servant obeys without knowing his lord's thoughts and plans, but you have been told all I have heard from my Father, so far as you are able to hear and understand it;—told it, not as mere servants and messengers,—the blind instruments of my will; but in the fulness of loving confidence, as sharers of my inmost thoughts and heart.

[29] John 12. 26; 13. 13 ff.

"But great though the honour be I thus give you, never forget that you have not, like the disciples of the Rabbis, with him whom they follow, chosen me for your teacher,[30] master, and friend. On the contrary, I chose you, not for mere idle friendship, but that I might appoint you to go forth as my disciples, and work in spreading my Kingdom, and bear fruit in winning men to the truth;—fruit that would remain for ever, both for yourselves, and for those you led to the light. Thus you owe all to me; your first discipleship, no less than the friendship to which I have now advanced you; and also that amazing honour I have promised you, that so long as you keep my commands, the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. How much fruit may ye not bear with this heavenly help, and how great the reward before God when ye have borne it!

[30] John 15. 16.

"Once more, never forget that without true brotherly love all your labour is valueless, for the spirit that prompts them alone gives its worth to your acts or words.

"Wonder not that I enforce this call to mutual love. Let it reign within my New Society,[31] for outside you will have only hatred. But let me comfort you by the thought that, as you know, it has hated me first. To be hated by it, is only to share my lot. And let it still more console you, to remember that this very hatred by the unbelieving world, is a proof that you no longer belong to it. If you

[31] John 15. 18.

CHAP. LIX.

belonged to it, it would love its own, for like loves like. It hates you, because I have chosen you out of it, and made you mine. To be hated of the ungodly is a testimony to your worth, as to be loved by them would be of the reverse. How ought this to cheer you in all your future trials!

"Remember what I said to you to-night,[32] already, 'A servant is not greater than his lord.' If they have persecuted me, as you know they have, they will also persecute you; if they have received my teaching, as you know they have not, they will receive yours as little. They will hate you and persecute you, because you come in my name, confessing me as the Messiah and Saviour,—for they know not Him who sent me.

[32] John 13. 16; 15. 20.

"This hatred of my name has no excuse, for I have dwelt among men, and taught them the truth,[33] and have done works among them, such as no other messenger of God, or prophet, has done;—works which should have made them feel that God had sent me, for they were such as Israel itself had agreed to accept, as proof of the presence of the Messiah, and they proved that my teaching was His divine word to them. But though they have both heard my teaching, and seen my mighty works, they have not believed. They have, thus, I repeat, no excuse. Nor is their hatred of My Name, hatred of me alone; it is hatred of God, my Father, no less; for my words and works, which they hate and reject, are not mine, but His.[34] And as these words and works are thus the self-revelation of my Father;—as He thus, by them, had made Himself visible in me, so far as the invisible God can do so, their hatred of me involves the awful wickedness of a hatred of the Eternal Father. Yet this hatred of me by the unbelieving world, is not a mere accident or chance, but was foreseen by God and spoken of in ancient prophecy, as you read;—'They hated me without a cause.'[35]

[33] John 15. 22.

[34] John 15. 23.

[35] Ps. 35. 19; 69. 4.

"You may, however, say in your hearts, 'If they have persecuted Thee, and have not kept Thy word; if, after having been taught, and having seen such things, they would not receive them; if they have hated Thee, and Thy Father, and if we are to find the same treatment, what good

is there in your sending us to them?' Let me encourage you, and dissipate such thoughts. For when the Helper comes, whom I shall send unto you from the Father—the Spirit of Truth,—who goes forth from the Father, and therefore is able to help you in all your needs,—He will bear witness of me in your souls; teaching you more deeply concerning me, and glorifying me to you in doing so, that you may be able to make right and effective use, in your witness before men, of all you have seen and heard while with me, from the beginning of my public work as the Messiah.

"I have told you these things about the hatred the world will show you, for my sake; that you may be prepared for it,[36] and not stumble, or be offended on account of it; but may meet it with so much the more earnest zeal and fidelity. As I have often told you, they will put you out of the synagogues;[37] but this, hard though it be in its consequences, is not the worst their fanatical hatred will do. You know how the Rabbis teach, that 'he who sheds the blood of the wicked is as if he offered sacrifice.'[38] They will act on this principle towards you, for the hour comes when every one who kills you will think your blood is an acceptable sacrifice offered to God. Nor will the heathen treat you better. Israel knows neither the Father nor me; and this wilful ignorance of divine things makes them act thus. I tell you all this, that, when these times of persecution come, you may be strengthened in your faith in me, and in your patient endurance of suffering for my sake. I did not speak of these things till now, because they were still distant when you first followed me, and because they might then have frightened you away from me. Besides, as long as I live, the hatred of men will be directed against me, not against you."[39]

[36] John 16. 1.

[37] Matt. 10. 17; 23. 34. Mark 13. 9. Luke 21. 12. John 9. 22, 34.

[38] Jalkut Schim. in Pent. 245. 3. Bammidbar Rabba, 329. 1.

[39] John 16. 4.

It is hard for even the best to rise superior to the present or near, by thinking of the distant or future. The Eleven were thoroughly cast down and dispirited, and stood silent; unable to break the stillness, even by a few of those questions which the disciples of Jewish teachers were in the habit of putting to their masters. The lofty promises of Jesus would one day strengthen their faithful souls, but, for

CHAP. LIX.

the time, they had no ear for them. As He spoke, He saw this, and gently reproved it.

"Now that I am on the point of returning to my Father," said He, "how are you so wholly engrossed in sadness, that while friends are always wont to ask often from one about to leave them,[40]—'where he is going,'—you have not been eager to do so?" He wished to be asked more closely about His going away, for it seemed as if His disciples had not fully understood His previous words, else they could not be so dejected.

40 John 16. 5.

"You forget the comfort I have given you, and dwell only on my near leaving, and the troubles to come after it. But I tell you only the truth, when I say that it is better for you that I go away. For if I were not to do so, your great Helper would not come to you, but, if I go away, I will send Him to you."

The history of the Church, after the ascension of Jesus and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, explains and confirms these words. Only the once Crucified but now Risen One; the glorified Son of God, sitting at the right hand of the Father, could have been proclaimed by the Apostles as the Lord of a new, eternal, and spiritual kingdom of heaven. Only the Conqueror of Death;—the Son of God, returned triumphant to the glory of the Father, could have been announced to the world as the Righteous One, the Victor over the prince of this world; as He not to believe in whom was sin.[41]

41 Lücke ii. 417.

Jesus continued—"You will have to strive, even to blood, with the opposition of the unbelieving world to me, and their evil opinion of me; against their illusion that they are doing right in their unbelief and in their persecution of my servants; and against their belief in the invincible power of wicked men, and of the prince of darkness. All these you must oppose and overcome. But human eloquence is far too weak for this great task. Without assistance and help from above, you will never be able to convince men of their sin and error, or to drive out the reign of evil. But when your Heavenly Helper has come, He will, through you, show the world their sin in not believing in me, and in

persecuting you, my servants. He will also convince them of my righteousness—that is, that I am not unrighteous and sinful, as they suppose,[42] but that my righteousness and innocence have been shown by my not shrinking even from the death of the Cross in the fulfilment of my great work; by my rising from the grave, and thereby proving that my death was a voluntary act of love to man, and by my returning to my Father, which will show that I am His Son, sent by Him as the Messiah. Thus it will be seen that my cause is righteous, and that I am the righteous and holy one of God. He will, finally, convince men of the utter weakness of all the powers of evil, and of their having been judged and condemned of God, by revealing to them the complete overthrow of the reign of the devil, and of the works of darkness, by my life, my teaching, my death, my resurrection, my return to my Father, and my victorious help to you my servants."[43]

[42] John 16. 8.

[43] 1 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 1. 4. Acts 2. 22—36; 3. 14, 26. Heb. 7. 26.

He had touched the confines of great and mysterious truths in the future economy of His kingdom, but felt Himself forced to go no farther. A wider field of higher teaching lay before Him, but their present weakness and incapacity to understand lofty spiritual things, forced Him to break off further revelations. "I have yet many things," He continued, "to say to you, but you cannot hear them now.[44] Yet be not cast down. When your Helper, the Spirit of Truth, comes from above, He will give you fuller instructions, and will strengthen your minds to understand them. He will lead you to the knowledge of the truth in its whole extent, and will illuminate for you all the heights and depths of my meaning, in all that I have said to you. Nor need you fear to trust Him less than you have trusted me;[45] for just as I have not spoken of myself, but have only repeated what I have heard from my Father, He, the Spirit of Truth, will not speak for Himself, or of His own promptings, but will utter only what He has heard from God. Nor will He simply explain my words, and reveal higher aspects of the truth. He will also announce to you things future. He will give you, my apostles, the gift of prophecy, by which the future development of my

[44] John 16. 12.

[45] John 16. 13.

CHAP. LIX.

Kingdom will be revealed to you, to fill you with comfort and triumph.

"You must not think, however, that the Holy Spirit will teach you any new or different truths, not connected with me, your Saviour. He will only purify and enlighten your hitherto imperfect conceptions concerning me,[46] and, while thus fitting you to spread my kingdom, will but develop, expand, and complete what I have taught you, and thus increase my glory. All that the Father has is mine,[47] as the Son, consecrated and sent forth by Him to carry out His work; the Son, in whom the Father, for this end, dwells and works in closest communion, as He also dwells in like communion with the Father. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit will teach you only what He hears from the Father, He can teach you no other doctrine than mine."

[46] John 16. 14.

[47] John 16. 15.

But all the instruction and comfort Jesus could administer; all the warnings, on the one hand, of the difficulties and sufferings; and all the supports, on the other, in rich promises of power, help, and blessing from above, could not dispel the sadness of the Apostles, or bring them joy and courage. The near departure of their loved Master filled their minds with abiding dejection and anxious fear.

In tender sympathy, therefore, Jesus once more sought to cheer them. "I said, indeed," He went on, "that very soon you would see me no longer,[48] but yet, a little while more, and you *will* see me again."[b]

[48] John 16. 16.

The Apostles were more than ever perplexed by these words.[49] They thought only of an earthly communion with their Master, such as they still enjoyed, and could not understand the sudden change of not seeing Him, and seeing Him again, or the double use of the words—"A little while,"—or what He meant by saying so often that He was going to the Father. Wondering questions followed between them, and they were anxious to ask an explanation, when Jesus, seeing their perplexity, anticipated their wish.

[49] John 16. 17.

"Do you inquire among yourselves," said He, "what I mean by saying, 'A little while, and ye will not see me:[50] and, again, a little while, and ye will see me;' and 'I am

[50] John 16. 19.

going to the Father?' Ye shall, indeed, be in great trouble at my death, for I am presently to die, though you seem as if you could not credit it. Indeed, ye will be sad, when the world that rejects me will rejoice. But your sorrow will be turned into joy, as sudden as that of the mother when she bears a son, and forthwith forgets the past for gladness that a man is born into the world; for you know that no joy is so great to a woman, in our nation, as that of having a son. So, truly, you will have sorrow now at my death, but it will pass into abiding joy when you see me again, in my spiritual return.

"In that day the Spirit of Truth will have given you such a full and satisfying knowledge of all that concerns me and my Kingdom, that you will have no need, as now, to ask me respecting any words or matters you do not understand.[51] You will no longer miss my earthly presence, but be joyful in the possession of full enlightenment. For most truly do I assure you, that all you ask my Father in my name—all illumination, all gifts, and joys of the Spirit—He will give you. Hitherto, from want of insight and experience, you have asked nothing in my name, and, therefore, have, as yet, no dream of the boundless gifts your Father in Heaven is ready to give you—no dream of His comforting and supporting grace. From this time, ask in my name, and you will receive what you ask, that your joy may be complete.[52]

"I have spoken of my going away, and of your seeing me again,[53] and of what would flow from it, in figures, and darkly. But a time comes when I will no more speak to you in this way, but will instruct you clearly and plainly, through the Spirit, respecting the Father.[54] In that day ye shall ask in my name, because you will then be enlightened by the Spirit of Truth,[55] and you will not need that I intercede for you that your prayers, thus offered, may be heard; for the Father Himself loves you because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from Him,[56] and will therefore hear you, without my intercession. Nor must you ever forget this great truth—the sum of my life and work—that I came forth from the Father to appear in

[51] John 16. 23.

[52] John 16. 24

[53] John 16. 25

[54] John 16. 12, 13, 14.

[55] John 16. 26.

[56] John 16. 27.

CHAP. LIX.

the world, and now leave the world to go back to Him again."[57]

57 John 16. 28.

The disciples, listening to these words, fancied they now understood, in part, at least, what had before seemed so dark.[58] They had, at least, realized, from His last sentence, that, as He had come forth from God, and was about to return to Him, He must be going to heaven. Perhaps they thought, in their simple way, that they also understood better what He had said about their seeing Him again. It seemed as if He had, already, fulfilled His promise to speak clearly, and without metaphor, to them. That He should, moreover, have known, without being told them,[59] the questions they had in their hearts, so astonished them, that they, further, felt sure He was omniscient, and did not need any one to ask Him, but could answer their questions without having been told them. Awed and vividly impressed, they felt a fresh corroboration of their belief in Him, as having come forth from God, and hastened to tell Him their strengthened conviction.[60]

58 John 16. 29.

59 John 16. 30.

60 John 16. 31.

"Is it so, that you now feel sure you believe in me?" asked Jesus. "An hour is coming, and, indeed, has come, when your faith will have a hard test. Will you stand firm?[61] Alas! how soon will you waver; for, in that hour, you will be scattered, each to his own home, and leave me alone!" "Yet," added He, after a pause, in calm and clear assurance that, though forsaken of man, He would have the helping and protecting presence of the Father—"yet I am not alone, for the Father is with Me."

61 John 16. 32.

"I have spoken as I have," He continued;—"have given you these consolations and promises, that you might have rest and peace in Me,[62] by communion with Me as the loving and loved. In the world, indeed, affliction is your lot, for men will hate and persecute you, as I have said, for my sake; but, be of good heart, I have conquered and broken the might of the world and its prince, and they can neither hinder your salvation, nor check the triumph of My Kingdom."

62 John 16. 33.

The farewell discourse was ended with this note of triumph—"I have conquered the world!" But now, before He went forth into the night, so big with fate, He could not

break up for ever the communion He had had with them so long, through joy and sorrow, without gathering them round Him in a parting prayer. He was about to die for the redemption of the world, and, as the Great High Priest of humanity, would make intercession, before yielding Himself the sacrifice. I venture, reverently, to amplify the expression, that the import may be more easily caught.

Lifting up His eyes to heaven—the Apostles standing, as the manner of their nation was, while He prayed—He began,[63] "Father, the hour of my death has now come. Glorify Thy Son on the completion of the work of salvation, that Thy Son may glorify Thee as its author, before man. Glorify Him, in accordance with Thy will, by which Thou hast given Him power over all men; for Thou hast appointed Him the only Saviour and Redeemer, to carry out Thy purpose of salvation, which regards the world; that He should give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is everlasting life, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent—Me, Jesus, the Messiah. I have glorified Thee on earth, for I have made known Thy name,[64] Thy will, and Thy plan of salvation for man, and have thus completed the work Thou hast given Me to do. Therefore, glorify Me, now,[65] O Father, when I rise from my work on earth into Thy presence, in heaven, with the glory which I had with Thee, before the world was. Let me enter again into that divine communion in Thine uncreated glory, which I had before the creation of the world!"

63 John 17 1.

64 John 17. 4.

65 John 17. 5

He had, till now, prayed for Himself. He passed next to intercession for His disciples, urging His faithful obedience to His divine mission, as a ground for His being heard.

"I have made known Thy name unto the men whom Thou hast given me out of the unbelieving world.[66] They were Thine own, for they were of Thy true Israel, and Thou gavest them to Me, and faithfully and truly did they receive my words as Thine, and they have kept them. In much they may have failed to understand, but they have been true and firm in their belief in Me, as having been sent by Thee, and as speaking Thy truth. Now, also, they have learned to

66 John 17. 6

CHAP. LIX.

know, and do acknowledge, that all that Thou hast given me[67]—all that I have said and done—is, as it truly is, from Thee!

[67] John 17. 7, 8.

"I pray for them. I pray not, now, for those who know Thee not; the unbelieving world,[68] but for Thine own, now in Thy presence—Thine own, whom Thou hast given Me. My whole life and work has been, and is, a prayer for the world at large,[69] from which My people must be gathered, but I pray, now, for these, Thy servants, because they are Thine, though Thou hast given them to Me. And all things that are mine are also Thine, and Thine are Mine: the work, the aim, the means, the power, the grace, are, alike, Mine and Thine, for I am in Thee and Thou in me. Neither I, nor Thou, Eternal Father, work, nor have, for Himself, but each for the other, and, thus, though they are Thine, I am glorified in them. Great is their need of Thy help, for I, their friend and helper, am about to leave them, but they remain in the world that hates them for my sake. Without Thy heavenly aid and protection, they will not be able to do the work Thou hast appointed them. Therefore, Holy Father, keep them true to Thy name, which Thou gavest Me to make known to them, that by their common faith and love they may be one, as Thou and I are one.[70] While I was in the world, I watched and protected those whom Thou thus committedst to My care, and kept them faithful to Thy name;—kept them from the evil one, from denying Thee, from falling away from Thee; and none of them has perished but the son of perdition—as could not but be, for the Scripture must be fulfilled.[71] Thou must watch and keep them, now that I shall leave them!

[68] John 17. 9.

[69] Matt. 5. 44. Luke 23. 34.

[70] John 17. 11.

[71] John 17. 12.

"But, now, I come to Thee, and these things I speak, being yet in the world,[72] that they may have, in their own souls, the perfect joy that is in Mine, feeling assured confidence that the grave will not have dominion over Me, and that they will have Thee for their helper. I have given them Thy word, and for their receiving it, the world has hated them; because they do not belong to it, as I do not. Therefore, O Father, keep them! I ask not that Thou shouldest

[72] John 17. 13.

take them out of the world because it hates them; for suffering and struggle are needed to perfect their spiritual life, and to spread abroad my Kingdom. But I ask that Thou shouldest protect them from the evil one, that they, too, become not sons of perdition. They, like Me, are not of the world, for it is the kingdom of the evil one;[73] therefore, they need Thy protecting care, and as Thine own will surely have it.

[73] John 17. 16.

"Thou hast brought them out from amidst the unbelieving and hostile world, and hast given them to Me, and they have received, and kept, Thy Word, made known to them by Me. Thus they live in the Truth, for Thy Word is Truth; sanctify them in this, the sphere of their new spiritual life: not only keep them in it, but consecrate and prepare them for their great work, by giving them, through the Spirit of holiness and truth, divine enlightenment, power, boldness, love, zeal. Even as Thou didst send Me into the world,[74] but didst first consecrate Me by the Spirit, given without measure, that I might accomplish the work Thou gavest Me to do, I have also sent them into the world, and they, O Father, need a similar consecration, in Thine own measure, to prosper in Thy work.

[74] John 17. 18.

"For their sakes I consecrate myself to Thee, in My death—as a holy offering[75]—for I am both high priest and sacrifice; that they, also, may be made holy in the Truth, by Thy Spirit—the Helper whom Thou wilt send, because I, the Holy One, have thus died for them.

[75] John 17. 19.

"But I pray not for these, Thy servants now before Thee, alone, but for all them, also, who will henceforth believe in Me, through their word—that they all, teachers, believers, and converts, may be one, in mutual fellowship and communion of love; the copy of that between Thee, Father, and Me:—communion so deep and holy that Thou art in Me, and I, in Thee. May they be, thus, one in each other, by being one in Us, by loving vital communion with Thee and Me, that the unbelieving world may have a visible proof, and may believe, that Thou didst send Me—the source—the centre—the stay of such heavenly love.

"That all who shall, now, or hereafter, believe in Me, may

CHAP. LIX.

be thus, one, in holy love and life, even as We are one—I have given them, as their future inheritance, at My coming, in My eternal Kingdom, part in that heavenly glory which Thou hast given Me; that they may share it with Me, for ever. I have given it them, that they may be one, even as We are one,[76] for how strong must it be as a bond of unity, that they are heirs together of the same glory with Me in heaven. I have given it them that they may thus be perfectly joined in one; I dwelling in Them and Thou in Me; that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them with the same Father's love, with which Thou hast loved Me; and may thus believe on Me—the Saviour of the world.[77]

"Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given Me, from all the generations of men, be with Me hereafter, to enjoy eternal life,[78] and everlasting communion with Me, in that heavenly world whither I am now going. It is the high reward of their faithfulness, their supreme consolation amidst all earthly trials, their glorious animating hope. I will that their joy may be full, in seeing and sharing My heavenly glory, as they have seen and shared My humiliation on earth—that glory with Thyself, which Thou hast given Me because Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.

"Righteous Father, I know that Thou wilt carry out this My will, for, though the world has not known or acknowledged Thee, as revealed in My words and deeds[79]—I have known Thee, as working in Me, and revealing Thyself through Me—known Thee by direct immediate knowledge—and these, Thy servants before Thee, having opened their hearts, and received My word, have known and believed that Thou hast sent Me. I have made known unto them Thy Name, and will make it known through the Spirit whom I will send; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, Thou mayest also make dwell in their hearts, and that I, by the Spirit, may dwell in them for ever."[80]

How sublimely this prayer was realized in the history of the Apostles, the "Acts" and the Epistles abundantly illustrate. It was their common glory to believe that

76 John 17. 22.
77 John 4. 42; 10. 16.
78 John 17. 24.
79 John 17. 25
80 John 17 23.

nothing could separate them from the love of God in Christ; that He, by His Spirit, was with them, and that they overcame all that opposed, through His help. The contrast between the dejected, faint-hearted, materializing Galilæan fishermen and peasants of the Gospels, and the heroic, spiritual confessors of Pentecost and after-times, is, itself, a miracle, great beyond all others. The illumination of soul, the grandeur of conception, the loftiness of aim, are a transformation from a lower to an indefinitely higher mental and moral condition, as complete as the change from early twilight to noon, and find their only solution in the admission that they must have received the miraculous spiritual enlightenment from above which Jesus had promised to send them.

## CHAPTER LX.

### THE ARREST.

CHAP. LX.

WHILE Jesus was tenderly bidding farewell to His few followers in the upper room, all was bustle and excitement among the Church authorities, now on the track of His blood by the help of Judas.

It was the great holiday of the year at Jerusalem: the week in which, beyond any other time, the whole population gave themselves up to rejoicing. The citizens, from the highest to the lowest, were reaping the great gold harvest of the year from the myriads of pilgrims, and they, on their side, had the excitement of numbers, and novelty, and religious enthusiasm. A mere mountain city, Jerusalem lived by the Temple, either directly or indirectly, and it was now the loadstone that had drawn the whole Jewish world around it.

With the craft that habitually marked him, the tetrarch Antipas had come up from Tiberias, to show how devoutly he honoured the Law, and had taken his residence in the old castle of the Asmoneans, which still remained in the hands of his family. It was near the Xystus, and exactly opposite the Temple, to which he could cross by the upper bridge, over the Tyropœon Valley, between Zion and Moriah.[a]

Pilate, also, had arrived from Cæsarea, to secure, in person, the preservation of order in the dangerous days of the feast. His quarters were in the new palace, built by Herod the Great on Zion. It was the pride of Jerusalem. "The kinds of stone used in its construction," says Josephus, "were countless. Whatever was rare abounded in it. The roofs astonished every one by the length of their beams, and the beauty of their adornment. Vessels, mostly

of gold and silver, rich in chasing, shone on every side. The great dining-hall had been constructed to supply table-couches for three hundred guests. Others opened in all directions, each with a different style of pillar. The open space before the palace was laid out in broad walks, planted with long avenues of different trees, and bordered by broad deep canals and great ponds, flowing with cool, clear water, and set off along the banks with innumerable works of art."[1] It was the vast citadel-palace in which the tragedies of the family of Herod has been enacted. Here Archelaus had reigned, and Glaphyra had died. By right of war, the Romans had taken it, as the chief building of the city, for the residence of the procurators, and had made it the Prætorium, or head-quarters. Its enclosure—large enough to permit almost an army to be gathered in it, if necessary—ran along the inner side of the first city wall, and was connected with the great castles of white stone—Mariamne, Hippicus, and Phasaelus, which Herod had built; the whole constituting, in fact, a vast fortification.

The high priest at the time of the Passover, as we have seen, was Caiaphas. The real head of the priesthood, however, was the crafty Hannas, or Ananus, without whom nothing of moment was done in the affairs of the theocracy. As father of the greatest Sadducean family, he was fitly notorious for his harsh judgments, and was presently to take the chief part in the death of Jesus, as his son afterwards did in that of St. James.[2] He had been appointed high priest by Quirinius in the year A.D. 7, but had been deprived of the dignity seven years later by Valerius Gratus. The unique honour was reserved to him, however, of seeing his five sons successively pontiffs—one of them twice—a distinction which, in later years, gained for him, among his countrymen, the name of the most fortunate of men.

Intrigue and unwearied plotting were the very life of Hannas and his house. The gliding, deadly, snakelike smoothness with which they seized their prey was a wonder even to their own generation, and had given them a by-name as hissing vipers[3] When Quirinius, after the census,

[1] Bell. Jud. ii. 9. 4.

[2] Ant. xx. 9. 1.

[3] Derenbourg, 232.

CHAP. LX.

sacrificed the high priest Joazer, who had brought on himself universal hatred by his services to the Romans, Hannas was chosen as the one of the Temple aristocracy least displeasing either to the Romans or the Jews.[4] He had managed to maintain his influence under three procurators through difficult times. Under Valerius Gratus, he had had to give way to Ismael Ben Phabi, but, after a year, had had him displaced, in favour of Eleazar, one of his own sons. He, himself, declined to take the place again, on the same ground on which Jonathan, another of his sons, afterwards did so, in the days of Herod Agrippa, when that king wished him to take it a second time. The family, though loose enough in more serious matters, were very strict as to hierarchical order. No one, they held, should put on again the sacred vestments after having once laid them off and released himself from the obligations under which their wearer lay.[5] Hannas bowed to this rule, as vital to the theocratic constitution, by the help of which his house stood at the head of Israel. He chose, therefore, henceforth to guide the reins in safe obscurity, but with a firm hand.

[4] Ant. xviii. 2. 1.

[5] Ant xix. 6. 5.

His sons, Eleazar, Jonathan, Theophilus, Matthias, and Hannas, successively became high priests, but when, at his death, the leading spirit was gone, the brutality of the Sadducee came more prominently into play, and speedily led to the ruin of the house.

Among the high priests who had interrupted the direct reign of this family, Caiaphas, son-in-law of Hannas, ruled longest. At the time of the condemnation of Jesus, he had held the high priesthood for seventeen years, having given Pilate no excuse for setting him aside, in spite of the conflict respecting the eagles, the shields, and the conduits of Jerusalem. He even retained it till after the great day, in the year A.D. 36, when the sacred vestments, so long held from them, were handed over by Vitellius permanently to the Jews, instead of being given out to them from the strong room of Antonia, a week before each great feast, for seven days' purifications, washings, and consecrations, to free them from heathen

defilement, before they could be worn. Caiaphas, however, had little to do with procuring this great favour, and was almost immediately after deposed; Jonathan, the son of Hannas, being appointed in his stead.

Thus, at the time of the condemnation of Jesus, the acting high priest was only a puppet in the hands of a powerful family, at the head of which stood Hannas, his father-in-law, sorely envied by the rest of the priestly aristocracy.[6]

Jewish tradition describes the grades of the ancient hierarchy as consisting of the high priest; his deputy, or Sagan; two suffragans of the Sagans; seven priests, to whom were entrusted the keys of the Temple; and three treasurers, whose office it was to give out the sacred vessels.[7] Of those holding these offices when Jesus was condemned, we can still darkly make out some. Beside Caiaphas, at his right hand, sat Hannas, the titular second, but real head. Jochanan Ben Zacchai, called John in the Acts of the Apostles, and one Alexander,[8] seem to have held the next dignities, and after them came the five sons of Hannas, already an old man, Eleazar, Jonathan, Theophilus, Matthias, and Hannas—the five apparently hinted at in the awful parable of Dives and his five brothers[9]—all to be high priests hereafter, and Hannas, the youngest, to stain his pontificate by the murder of James, the brother of Jesus.

The names of some other members of what we may call the self-constituted high ecclesiastical council, still survive. Among these were Joazer and Eleazar, the sons of that Simon Boëthus of Alexandria, father of the second Mariamne, the belle of Jerusalem, married by Herod. The father, though well-nigh a heretic in the eyes of the national party, had been made high priest by his royal son-in-law, and his sons had succeeded him in the dignity, but bore an evil name for their state and violence. Their guard of spearmen, indeed, became an object of popular hatred.[10] Simon, surnamed Kanthera—the Quarrelsome—the murderer of St. James, the son of Zabdai,—and his son Elioneus, afterwards high priest, had a right to attend, and did so with a pomp which brought on the family the curse of the people—

[6] Hausrath, i. 453.

[7] Maimon. Hilch. B.C. 9—12.

[8] Acts 4. 6.

[9] Sepp, vi. 8. See note to chap. 53.

[10] Derenbourg, 232.

CHAP. LX.

"Woe to your fine feathers, ye family of Kanthera!" Ismael Ben Phabi, the handsomest man of his day,[11] was another mitred high counsellor, to be famed hereafter for the clubs and blows of his serving men, the greed of his bailiffs, his shameless nepotism, and the Oriental luxury of his dress; one outer tunic of which cost a hundred minæ—equal, perhaps, at this day, to eighteen hundred pounds.[12] There were, also, Johanan Ben Nebedai—the persecutor of St. Paul; infamous in later days as a sensual glutton, who seized even the holy sacrifices for his feasts; and Issachar, of Kefar Barkai, who, in his pontificate of a later day, would not sacrifice except in silk gloves, for fear of soiling his hands, and lived to have those hands barbarously cut off by King Agrippa.[13] Such were the men about to seize Jesus. No wonder that even the Talmud relates that voices were heard from the Holy of Holies, crying—"Depart from the Temple, ye sons of Eli; ye defile the house of Jehovah!"

The elders of the people—a body equivalent to a Jewish Senate—were in no less agitation respecting Jesus; for they, also, were identified with the preservation of things as they were. One or two of them—Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea—were secretly in His favour, but they had not moral courage to take His part openly. The names of the rest have perished.

The college of Rabbis took an equally vigorous part, but its members at this time can only be guessed, though some who had met the boy Jesus, twenty years before, in the Temple school,[14] doubtless, survived.

It was late in the night of Thursday when Jesus had ended His last discourse and farewell prayer. According to the immemorial custom of the nation to mingle songs of praise to God with their feasts,[15] the little band had already sung the first two of the six Psalms—the one hundred and thirteenth to one hundred and eighteenth—which formed the great Hallelujah of the Passover and all other feasts. The stillness of the night had been broken by the sound at the time when the second cup had been poured out.[16] Now, at the close, the voices of the eldest of them chanted, with slow, solemn strains, the remainder of the

[11] Derenbourg, 232.

[12] Derenbourg, 234.

[13] Derenbourg, 212.

[14] See page 226, vol. i.

[15] Isaiah 30. 29. Matt. 26. 30, 36—46. Mark 14. 26, 32—42. Luke 22. 39—46. John 18. 1.

[16] Sepp, vi. 125.

Hallelujah—the rest responding with the word, Hallelujah, at the close of each verse. The anthem began fitly—"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake," and closed with the words of the hundred and eighteenth Psalm—"Blessed be He that cometh in the name of Jehovah;" the Apostles responding—"in the name of Jehovah, Hallelujah!" And, now, all was over, and the Eleven, following their Master, went out into the night. They were on their way to Gethsemane.

The spirit of Jesus had, hitherto, been calm and serene. But the final close: the break with all the past: the shadow, deeper than that of Kedron, before Him, for the time brought on a reaction, which, till it passed, overwhelmed Him with trouble. No wonder the Apostles had been cast down when even He, who had been exhorting them to dismiss sorrow, was Himself moved. Behind Him lay life, before Him death: He was about to leave friends; and the fair earth, which, as a man, He loved so well; and His infant Church, the hope of the world He had come to save. Before Him lay, not only natural death, but shame, derision, misconception. He whose whole soul was truth, was to be crucified as a deceiver: the one on earth absolutely loyal to God, He was to die as a blasphemer. To be misrepresented: to feel the utter falseness of charges, and to be crucified on the ground of them! How might it affect the little band, to whom the future of His kingdom was entrusted? He had hitherto restrained Himself from using His supernatural power in His own behalf—would He still do so? He had but to speak, and all would be changed; for He who could calm the waves of the sea, could still the tumult of the people, and what were Temple guards or Roman soldiers against legions of angels? Would He still absolutely subordinate all thought of self? Would He, to the end, let men do with Him as they pleased, though He had at His command all the powers of heaven? The temptation of the desert and of the mountain, may, for a moment, have returned, and who can tell the struggle it must have been to overcome it?

Nor was even this all. The mysteries of the divine counsels must be for ever unknown, but they pressed, in all

CHAP. LX.

their weight, on His absolutely sinless soul. He was to give His life a ransom for man: to be made an offering for sin, though He knew none: to be repaid for infinite love and goodness by ignominy and shame. Perfect innocence freely yielding itself to misconception and death for the unworthy and vile, would be transcendent even in a man, but in the Son of God,—who can tell what it was to leave the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens to stoop to Calvary! —for Him who could raise the dead to descend to the tomb! No wonder His human soul was for the moment eclipsed and clouded.

They passed, silent and sad, down the steep side of the Kedron, for the town gate was open that night as it was Passover, and, crossing by the bridge, were on the road which leads over the Mount of Olives to Bethany. The noise of the multitude had passed away, and the world lay asleep under the great Passover-moon. The path lay among stone-walled orchards and gardens, which Titus was, hereafter, to find so many deadly battle-grounds, with the walls for ramparts.[17] He had gone out of the city, each night, to Bethany, but had no intention of doing so now, for He knew that His hour had come. Always given to solitary prayer, among the hills so dear to Him as a Galilæan, He had often turned aside to commune with His Father on one part or other of Olivet, and, this night, chose the stillness and shade of a spot which His presence made, henceforth, sacred for ever. An olive orchard lay near—known by the name of the Oil-Press—or, as we are accustomed to think of it—Gethsemane.[18] It was called so from a rock-hewn trough in it, in which the rich olives were trodden with the feet, the oil flowing into a lower vat at hand. The new leaves were opening over the branches as they passed, and the moonlight fell through their motionless network, on the tender spring grass. Stillness, peace, solitude, filled earth and air: even the birds slept safely on the boughs, under the great sky; for they, too, had a Heavenly Father. Moriah rose in richly wooded terraces behind, crowned with the snow-white Temple in its magnificence, and, before them, from its border of gardens and orchards, the yellow

[17] Bell. Jud. v. 6. 2.

[18] גַּת שְׁמָנָא

slopes of Olivet swelled between them and the loved cottage of Bethany.

Amidst this quiet and beauty of nature Jesus turned aside, and entered the enclosure of Gethsemane, to strengthen His soul for the coming crisis. It was a fitting place—amidst olives, the emblems of peace!

A square, stone-walled spot, close by the path to Bethany, on the edge of the Kedron ravine, under the shadow of the Temple hill, is still shown as the spot. Venerable olive-trees, tended with superstitious care, are claimed as the very witnesses of our Saviour's agony, but it is fatal to the belief in their age, that Titus afterwards cut down all the trees round Jerusalem, for military use, and that the same fate has befallen the whole neighbourhood even in later sieges. But the gnarled trunks, twenty to thirty feet high, the broad branches, and the still seclusion, at least reproduce the outward features of the scene.

When the soul is overwhelmed it seeks to be alone, and yet not too far from human sympathy and help. To take all the Eleven with Him, into the depths of the garden, would have invaded the sacredness of His retirement. Only three, the most trusted—His long-tried, and early followers—Peter, whose guest He had been in the bright Capernaum days, and James and John, knit to Him by special tenderness, if not even by relationship—were let follow Him beyond the first few steps into the enclosure. The others were to sit down and rest, while He went into the deeper shade, to pray.

Followed by the Three, He passed out of hearing of the rest, and presently, leaving even these three behind, with the words, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death—tarry ye here, and watch with Me;" He went on, about a stone's cast—alone. And, now, the great pent up sorrow burst forth. It had been gathering, no one knows how long, but the excitement of action had repressed it as yet—as the wind keeps a heavy rain cloud from breaking. But, here, instead of the city and its multitudes of men, there was silence and loneliness: instead of the distractions of conflict with enemies, or discourses with friends, He was face to face with His own thoughts, and with the Past and the

CHAP. LX.

Future, and that in the night, and in such awful isolation. For it seemed as if even heaven were as far from Him as the sympathy of earth: as if even its lights had gone out, and He was treading the valley of the shadow of death in a horror of thick darkness. Must He bear all? Must the cup be drunk to the dregs? Was redemption possible only at the awful price that so oppressed His soul? Could the hour not pass? Was it not possible for the Eternal Father to save Him from it?

The sacred writers labour to describe the agony that overwhelmed Him. They tell us that He first kneeled, then fell on His face on the earth, and prayed with strong crying and tears,[19] till His sweat became, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground. He was "exceeding sorrowful," "sore amazed," "very heavy." His soul, as it were, sank under the vision that rose before it. "O my Father," He cried, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but Thine, be done." But as long as there was a struggle of the frail human nature, and a cry, however reverent and lowly, for change, if possible, in the burden laid on Him, there could be no peace. Rising from the ground, in His agony of spirit, even human sympathy and presence seemed as if they would be a relief. He came therefore to the Three, but only to find that, in His long, wrestling supplications, even they, His nearest ones, overcome by weariness of body and spirit, lay sunk in deep sleep. Rousing Peter—lately so boastful—He gently reproved and warned him, and with him, the others. "What! could you not watch with me one hour? Watch, and pray as ye do so, that ye may not expose yourselves to temptation to be untrue to me, and to be offended at me, as I have said you would. The spirit indeed is willing to stand by me faithfully, but human nature, with its instinct of self-preservation, is weak, and if you heed not, will make you fall!"

Leaving them again, He once more prostrated Himself in prayer, but the clouds were already breaking, for His whole being had returned to its habitual harmony with the will of God. Every desire or wish of His own, was passing like a

[19] Heb. 5. 7.

troubled dream. "O my Father," cried He now, "if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." Perfect peace of soul can only be found in absolute submission to the One Supreme Will, and that He was fast attaining. Returning to the Three—who knows for what?—He found them asleep again. They were losing, by their hour's sloth, the opportunity of cheering and helping their Master in His sorest trial. Man had thus failed Him, but the need of human comfort was passing away. Retiring, therefore, once more, and prostrating Himself a third time, the same calm, child-like submission to His Father, again rose from His lips. He had triumphed. He had been heard in *that* He feared. He no longer craved a change, even if possible, in the ordered course of the divine purposes: His earnest cry had passed into still submission; His intense desire into holy acquiescence. He thought no longer of Himself, but of the perfect love and wisdom of the Father. He had ceased to have a wish: enough for Him, henceforth, the all-holy, all-wise, all-loving, will of the Father. His spirit had broken through the cloud that for a moment darkened it, and reposed once more in the calm light of the face of God.[20] The tempter had fled, and, in His place, as after the victory of the wilderness, we are told by St. Luke, "there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him."[21]

[20] See Schleiermacher's Predigten, i. 25.

[21] Luke 22. 43.

Meanwhile, Judas had been busy. Exposed, and dismissed by his Master from the company of the Apostles, he had only been the more set to carry out his miserable purpose.[22] Hastening through the illuminated streets to the authorities, he had, forthwith, reported that the favourable moment seemed to have come. Jesus had, once more, ventured into Jerusalem, and though it might not be safe to take Him in the thronged city, it would be easy to come upon Him outside the walls, as He was in the habit of going each night for prayer to a spot at the foot of the Mount of Olives. The traitor meant Gethsemane.

[22] John 18. 2—12. Matt. 26. 47—56. Mark 14. 43—52. Luke 22. 47—53.

The authorities remained in permanent session till the arrest was effected, and at once detached part of the Temple Watch, a body acting as the police of the Temple and only

CHAP. LX.

23 Bell. Jud. iv. 4. 6.

24 John 18. 12.

25 John 18. 2—12. Matt. 26. 47—56. Mark 14. 43—52. Luke 22. 47—53.

armed, in a few cases, with wooden batons or clubs.[23] The officers of the watch, and even some of the chief priests and elders, in their excitement, accompanied them. It had been thought unwise, however, to trust so grave a matter to an undisciplined and weak force, and the high priest had, therefore, communicated with Pilate, representing, doubtless, that he proposed the arrest of a false Messiah, dangerous to the Roman power, and feared a rescue. A "band" had, therefore, been told off from the troops in Antonia, and these,[b] under the chiliarch[24] in command of the garrison, waited their orders. A rabble of the servants of the high priests and chief men, with lanterns and torches, to discover Jesus should He attempt to hide Himself, led the way, behind Judas, who went foremost as guide. It was the full moon of April, but the trees and recesses might aid an attempt at escape.

Jesus had just returned from His third prayer, and was rousing His disciples, when He heard the noise of the soldiers and the crowd, and saw their lights approaching.[25] The disappointment, even in His most trusted friends, asleep when they should have watched, and leaving it to Himself to discover Judas and his band, wounded His heart. With keen but gentle irony, therefore, He told them that they might sleep on now and take their rest, if they chose; their watching was no longer needed. His hour had come. Then, speaking in a serious strain, He bade them "rise and go out with Him, for the traitor was at hand."

Judas and his employers had utterly misjudged the character of Jesus. Knowing all that was before Him, and, now, calmly victorious over momentary human weakness, He did not wait for His enemies, but, taking His disciples with Him, went out of the garden enclosure to meet them. "Whom seek ye?" said He, as they approached. "Jesus the Nazarene," answered the foremost. To their confusion, the calm, self-possessed speaker presently told them that He was Jesus. Not a few in the Jewish crowd now gathered before Him, had heard Him spoken of as a prophet, and had, perhaps, even accepted Him as such. They had all heard of His supernatural power, from whatever source, and He

might now use it against them, though hitherto He had never availed Himself of it for personal ends. His kingly composure and dignity, moreover, awed them, for grandeur of soul and bearing enforce acknowledgment. Withal, it may be, He revealed a momentary glimpse of His transfiguration splendour, to show that He freely surrendered Himself, because His hour had come. From whatever cause, the crowd fell back in confusion, overturning each other in their alarm. "Whom seek ye?" asked Jesus once more. "Jesus the Nazarene," muttered the boldest. "I told you," replied He, "that I am He: if you seek me, let these men, my disciples, go their way." He had said, that of those whom the Father had given Him He had lost none,[26] and even in an earthly sense, He would now protect them.

Fear, as yet, paralyzed the crowd. Jesus had calmly owned Himself, but no one dared to lay hold of Him. Judas, still under the weird spell of evil, might well dread that all would miscarry. He had given a signal by which to know his late Master, reckoning on having to point Him out, and would now embolden those with him, by himself taking the first step in further action. He had arranged that he should mark Jesus to them, by going up to Him and giving Him the customary kiss of a disciple to his teacher. Stepping out, therefore, from the crowd, into the circle of the disciples, as one of their number, he approached with a hypocritical "Hail, Rabbi," and kissed Him tenderly.[27] He knew, by long experience, that he might do so safely. To the calm and keen question of Jesus—"Good friend, for what have you come?"—he returned no answer: for what answer could he give. But he had gained his end, for those behind, encouraged by his remaining uninjured after such treachery, laid hold of Jesus and bound Him, without the least resistance on His part.

Now followed the only act of violence; for Peter, impetuous as he was brave, could not see his Master thus led away, a prisoner, without a word or act on the part of His friends. "Lord, shall we smite them with the sword?" cried he; and without waiting an answer, or thinking of the hopelessness of a rescue, or of the odds against himself

[26] John 17. 12; 6. 39.

[27] καταφιλέω

CHAP. LX. alone, he drew the sword he had hung by his side, and made a fierce cut at one of the servants of the high priest, fortunately only grazing the skull, but yet cutting off an ear. It was a splendidly heroic act, but sadly out of place under such a Teacher. Turning to the wounded man, and at the same moment rebuking Peter, Jesus deprecated the fury of the crowd at the brave attack, by soft words and an effacement of the injury done. "Suffer thus far," said He, and then touched the ear, and healed it. Forthwith, turning to Peter, He told him to sheathe the sword. "He who uses violence," added He, "will suffer violence. If you use the sword, you expose all your lives to danger. Shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath given me? Shall I hesitate to please Him? If I wished to escape suffering, Peter, dost thou not know that I could ask my Father, and He would send me, instead of your help, twelve legions of angels—a legion for each of you—to protect me? But, then, that would not happen which the Scriptures have foretold I must undergo."

The disciples, after the first impulsive thought, had abandoned all idea of resistance; and as any attempt to rescue Jesus was clearly hopeless, since He did not put forth His supernatural power on His own behalf, and would not let them do anything; and as they themselves seemed in danger, through the impetuosity of Peter; all took to flight as soon as they saw their Master fairly in the hands of His enemies.

The intense excitement of the hierarchy had broken through all restraints of official dignity. The proposal for the arrest had been too important a matter to be trusted to any underlings, and hence, some of the head priests, and of the "elders," had joined the leaders of the Temple police in the wild march to Gethsemane. Surrounded on all sides, and firmly bound, as if His captors still feared that He would escape or be rescued, Jesus now turned to these dignitaries, so sadly out of their place in such a scene, and calmly, but keenly, brought home to them their shame. "You come out against me," said He, "as you might against a robber, or the head of a rising, with swords and clubs. I

sat, day by day, in the Temple, teaching, in the thick of the people. You had every opportunity for laying hold on me then, but you did nothing. The darkness of night is fitted for your designs: it is your hour: the powers of evil work by choice in the dark. But, in all this, there is no chance: it happens only in accordance with the predictions of the prophets." He said no more, and let them lead Him away. The disciples were scattered, but one form hovered after them, white in the moonlight. It was that of a young man, who had, apparently, been roused from sleep by the tumult, and having thrown his white linen sleeping cloth round him in his haste, was following Jesus towards the city. Who he was must remain for ever unknown. Was it Mark himself, who alone relates it? or one from the house likely attached to Gethsemane? Some have supposed him to have been Lazarus; others have had different conjectures; he was, at least, some faithful heart, eager to see what they would do with his Lord. The soldiers had let the Apostles flee, having no orders to arrest them; but this strange apparition attracted their attention, and they sought to lay hold on him. Casting off the cloth round him, however, he escaped out of their hands.

Yet there were friendly eyes following the sad scene, in the safe darkness of the night. Peter and another of the Apostles, who could only be John, had fled no further than safety demanded, and followed the crowd, at a distance, unable to leave one they held so dear.

The great object with the authorities was to hurry forward the proceedings against their prisoner so quickly, that they might hand him over to the Romans as one already condemned, before the people could be roused on His side. They had gained their point, so far.

On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus was first led to the mansion of Hannas, the head of the reigning priestly family, either in deference to his recognized influence, or because, as the oldest high priest, he was still recognized as the rightful, if not legal, dignitary. He could see Jesus, and hear His defence, and advise his son-in-law how to act. His "snake-like" craft might help the less acute Caiaphas.

What passed before Hannas, or what hints he sent Caiaphas, are not known. It may be that he simply passed on the prisoner to the legal high priest at once, hurrying to follow Him, and secure His condemnation.

The houses of the great, in the East, are, rather, a group of buildings, or chambers, of unequal height, near or above each other, with passages between, and intervening open spaces; the different structures having independent entrances, and separate roofs. Such a house, or rather, cluster of houses, has usually the form of a large hollow square, the four sides of which surround a roomy court; paved, in some cases; in others, planted with trees, and ornamented with a lawn of soft green. Sometimes, an underground cistern, a spring, or a bath, offers the luxury of abundant water, and makes the court an agreeable spot for relaxation or refreshment. Porticos and galleries surround it, and furnish chambers for guests and entertainments. In some houses there is also a forecourt, enclosed from the street by walls, and, in all, the inner court is reached by an archway through the front building—"the porch," in the narrative of the Gospels.

The hierarchical party were in permanent session in the mansion or "palace" of Caiaphas. A commission, consisting mainly of the chief priests, with Caiaphas at their head, had been appointed, to await the result of the treachery of Judas; for the whole party, in its alarm, had extemporized joint action, though their taking any judicial steps at all was irregular, for they formed no legal court or recognized tribunal. They were simply acting as a self-constituted body; partisans of established ecclesiastical order, and defenders of their own vested rights; gathered, at the summons of the high priest, in the blind excitement of fanaticism and passion, without rules of judicial proceeding, or legal standing as a court. The chief Rabbis of the school of Hillel generally kept aloof from such tumultuous and violent proceedings, which were already too common, and left them to those of the fierce school of Schammai, and to the merciless Sadducees.[28] The name Sanhedrim is given in the Gospels to such extemporized assemblies, simply as such; for

[28] Jost, i. 278.

the word means "an assembly." But it is not used in them as the title of a legal tribunal.[29] It was before a mob of dignitaries, not a "court," that Jesus was brought.

The commission were awaiting the arrival of their prey in the house of Caiaphas, who, as high priest, was the only representative of Judaism recognized by the Romans, and, therefore, the only one who could hold official relations with Pilate, to ask him to carry out their predetermined resolution to put Jesus to death.

[29] Jost, i. 281. Leyrer in Herzog. xv. 324. Graetz, Geschichte, 2 auf. iii. 145.

## CHAPTER LXI.

### THE JEWISH TRIAL.

CHAP. LXI.

PASSING through the closed porch, or archway, into the inner court, His captors led Jesus to one of the chambers opening from it, where His judges sat, ready to go through the mockery of a trial. The Roman soldiers had been halted outside, for their presence would have been a defilement, but the Jewish serving men went in with the prisoner, though only the few required accompanied Him to the inner chamber. The tribunal about to condemn Him, it must not be forgotten, was not a legal "court," but simply a self-constituted "Committee of Public Safety" extemporized by the excited Temple authorities and Rabbis, like the Vigilance Committees of America; with a Jewish Fouquier Tinville for President, in the person of the Sadducee Caiaphas. Knowing the illegality of their proceedings, they could only venture to propose the framing an indictment to lay before Pilate, and trust to their violence for extorting a condemnation from him.

The hierarchy were masters of form, and knew how to honour the appearance of justice while mocking the reality. In imitation of the traditional usages of the Sanhedrim, while it existed, the judges before whom Jesus was led sat, turbaned, on cushions or pillows, in Oriental fashion, with crossed legs, and unshod feet, in a half circle; Caiaphas, as high priest, in the centre, and the chief or oldest, according to precedence, on each side. The prisoner was placed, standing, before Caiaphas; at each end of the semicircle sat a scribe, to write out the sentence of acquittal or condemnation; some bailiffs, with cords and thongs, guarded the Accused, while a few others stood behind, to call wit-

nesses, and, at the close, to carry out the decision of the judges.[1]

Like most other matters in the Judaism of the time, nothing could be fairer, or more attractive, on paper, but on paper alone, than the rules for the trial of prisoners. The accused was, in all cases, to be held innocent, till proved guilty. It was an axiom, that "the Sanhedrim was to save, not to destroy life." No one could be tried and condemned in his absence,[2] and when a person accused was brought before the court, it was the duty of the president, at the outset, to admonish the witnesses to remember the value of human life, and to take care that they forgot nothing that would tell in the prisoner's favour. Nor was he left undefended; a Baal-Rib or counsel was appointed, to see that all possible was done, for his acquittal. Whatever evidence tended to aid him was to be freely admitted, and no member of the court who had once spoken in favour of acquittal could afterwards vote for condemnation. The votes of the youngest of the judges were taken first, that they might not be influenced by their seniors. In capital charges, it required a majority of at least two to condemn, and while the verdict of acquittal could be given at once, that of guilty could only be pronounced the day after. Hence, capital trials could not begin on the day preceding a Sabbath, or public feast. No criminal trial could be carried through in the night; the judges who condemned any one to death had to fast all the day before, and no one could be executed on the same day on which the sentence was pronounced.[3]

Rules so precise and so humane condemn the whole trial of Jesus, before Caiaphas, as an outrage. It was, in fact, an anticipation of the prostitution of justice which Josephus records as common in the later days of Jerusalem. "Fictitious tribunals and judicatures," he tells us, "were set up, and men called together to act as judges though they had no real authority, when it was desired to secure the death of an opponent."[4] As in those later instances, so, now, in the case of Jesus, they kept up the form and mockery of a tribunal to the close. No accuser appeared, and the judge himself

[1] Talmud, quoted in Keim, iii. 328.

[2] John 7. 51.

[3] Ginsburg, *Art* "Sanhedrim." Kitto's Bib. Cyclo. Keim iii. 345, 346.

[4] Bell. Jud. iv. 5. 4.

took the office, in utter violation of all propriety. Witnesses against the prisoner alone appeared, and were, indeed, eagerly brought forward by the judge; but not a single witness in His defence was called, though the law gave such witnesses the preference. No Baal-Rib—or counsel—was assigned Him, nor were any facilities provided, or even the possibility offered, for His calling witnesses in His favour. The "court," from the first, sought to condemn; not as the law required, to acquit. There was no attempt, as was usual, to ascertain the trustworthiness of the hostile evidence, nor any warning, beforehand, to those who gave it, of the moral and legal offence of untruthfulness.[5] So keenly, indeed, has the judicial murder of Jesus been felt by the Jewish nation, in later times, that the doctrine was afterwards invented in the Talmud, that any one who gave himself out as a false Messiah, or who led the people astray from the doctrines of their fathers,[6] could be tried and condemned the same day, or in the night. Yet in contradiction to this the monstrous fable was, also, coined, that a crier called aloud, for forty days, before Christ's condemnation, for witnesses in His favour to come forward.[7]

[5] Keim, iii. 330.

[6] Tosephta Sanhedrim, x.

[7] Toledoth Jeshu, Van der Alm (1841).

If we try to discover by what law it was possible to condemn Jesus legally, it will be found, that, provided He could not be proved guilty of some civil crime, there were no written laws whatever to which Caiaphas and his assessors could appeal against Him. The Old Testament had not anticipated the case of any one calling himself the Messiah, whether in a national or spiritual sense, and the charges so often made against Jesus, of having broken the laws of the Sabbath, even if He could not have defended Himself against them, were not punishable, by the laws of the day, with death. The grounds on which the theocracy could press for a capital conviction lay wholly outside the law of Moses, and even of those expansions and modifications of it which formed the current law. A pretext had to be invented for the course taken. His real offence was that the Church authorities felt He was diffusing a spiritual influence, which, if left to develop and spread, would inevitably undermine the corrupt theocracy, and with it, their

own power and worldly interests. To gain a brief respite, they were bent on putting Him to death, though His lofty purity of life and morals far transcended the highest ideals hitherto known, and His divine goodness was altogether unique. They did not see that, to kill Him, was only to hasten the ruin of the cause they sought to uphold.

But His spiritual glory remained hidden to their wilful blindness, and the shadow into which it threw their own shortcomings roused only fanatical rage. There remained nothing, therefore, since they could bring no capital charge recognized in the Law, against Him, except to feign horror as Jews, at the presumption of one so much below them in worldly station, raising Himself above the divinely revealed laws of Moses, and even claiming equality with God; and as hypocritical friends of the Roman, whom they in reality hated intensely, to pretend indignation and fear at the popular disturbance and disloyalty to the Emperor, which they affected to believe would result from His claim as Messiah King. Only on this last ground could they secure the indispensable assistance of Roman power, to put Him to death.

Caiaphas now, at last, had his enemy face to face. He would let Him feel what it was to denounce the priesthood as He had done, and to hold them up to the obloquy of the nation, as careless of the charge entrusted to them, by His taking it on Himself to interfere with their Temple jurisdiction, in His puritanical "cleansing" of the sacred enclosures. He had brought no end of odium on them, by the contrast between His zeal in this matter, and their alleged neglect, in allowing so called abuses. The fanatical reformer who would turn the world upside down, was now standing, bound, before him, and he had Him at his mercy. The rest of the self-constituted judges had their own injuries to avenge, for had not they, the Scribes and Pharisees,—teachers of the nation, been held up to contempt, as unsparingly as the knot of high caste Sadducees? Caiaphas had long made up his mind what to do. The form of a trial might be necessary, but the result was determined beforehand. He had already counselled both Sadducees and Pharisees, to lay aside mutual

disputes, and unite against Jesus, as one who endangered their common interests, and to sacrifice Him without hesitation. Policy, he had urged, demanded that He be at once put to death, to prevent His overthrowing the whole ecclesiastical constitution, with which their welfare and dignity were identified. The sentence was thus proclaimed before Caiaphas took his seat that night; the judge had already openly said that he intended to condemn. The whole proceedings were in fact, simply a smooth hypocrisy, to secure the necessary aid of the Roman executioner.

Deadly enemies at other times, the "court" were now on the most amiable terms with each other, in their anxiety to hunt down the common foe. The proceedings began by Caiaphas, as he glanced fiercely at his prisoner, asking Him various questions respecting His disciples and His teaching: Why He gathered so many followers? What He had meant by sending them through Galilee and Judea, announcing the coming of the Kingdom of God? Why, a few days before, at His entrance to the city, He had allowed the crowds to hail Him as the Messiah? What He meant by the kingdom of the Messiah, and why He did not formally and publicly proclaim Himself as such?

Jesus carefully avoided any allusion to His disciples in His answer, for to have referred to them, might have brought them into danger. As to Himself, the questions needed no inquiry; the matter spoke for itself. "I have taught frankly and without reserve," said He; "I have no secret doctrines; I have spoken everything I had to teach, publicly, in the synagogues and schools of the land, before friends and enemies; and here in Jerusalem, in the Temple, where I had for hearers the people assembled from all parts. I have taught nothing secretly,—nothing except in these public places. Why do you ask me? ask some of the multitudes who have heard me. They know what I have said to them, and what they say will seem to you more impartial than any words of mine. The Law requires that witnesses should first be examined in any trial."

But an honest and formal inquiry of this kind, though necessary by the Law, was no part of the plan of Caiaphas

and his assessors. They sought only to get Jesus handed over to the Romans, as soon as possible; that He might be beyond the hope of rescue, when the people, among whom He had so many supporters, awoke in the morning. That He should dare to direct the high priest as to his duty, and should presume to throw on the court the rightful task of proving His guilt, was a fresh offence, and provoked fierce looks and angry words, from the bench. The defence was at once rudely interrupted, for one of the turnkeys standing by, whether of his own accord, because he saw the feeling of the judges, or at a hint from Hannas or Caiaphas, in utter violation of judicial rules, or common decency, forthwith struck the prisoner on the mouth, with his hand, to silence Him. "Answerest thou the high priest thus boldly?" said he. Nothing could have pleased the bench better, and they did not attempt to rebuke the offender. It failed, however, to disturb the calm self-possession and dignity of Jesus. "If I have spoken what is false," He replied, "prove that I have done so, but if what I say be right, why do you strike me violently thus? No one has a right to take the law in his own hands, much less a servant of the court."

The appeal to the known and established forms of trial had not been lost. Hostile witnesses had already been sought to bring home to Jesus, if possible, some charge of false doctrine, or seditious language, but none had been found. The only evidence to be had would not suffice, even in such an assembly, to establish a capital charge of which the Romans would take cognizance. There were many, doubtless, who had heard Him use language which had given the Rabbis offence,—such as, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;"—words regarded as blasphemy, and, as such, punishable with death, by Jewish law; but they wanted to condemn Him on a charge punishable by Roman law. They had tried by spies, for months back, to draw from Him something they could twist into an attack on the national religion, or the Roman government, but had failed. It was hard to get a tolerable pretext for condemning Him.

Such evidence as they had was now however brought forward, in the hope that it would at least prove Him to be "a

CHAP. LXI.

deceiver of the people," stirring them up, and exciting them against the laws of Moses,[8] as defined by the Rabbis. But it was a fundamental rule of Jewish jurisprudence, that condemnation could only follow the concurrent testimony of, at least, two witnesses.[9] Some, however, who came forward, had nothing relevant to say, and others contradicted themselves. His last discourses were, doubtless, the special crime in the eyes of His accusers. Little could be said about His ovation on entering Jerusalem, except that He had not refused it, nor was even the expulsion of the buyers and sellers from the Temple brought up, for the spirit that dictated it was evidently noble, however the act itself might be challenged. The strong invectives against the collective hierarchy offered a safer ground for accusation. Unfortunately for the judges, suitable witnesses were not to be found. At the best those who came forward garbled, or misunderstood the words of Jesus; as the hierarchy themselves afterwards, before Pilate, twisted those respecting the tribute money into a directly opposite sense.[10] But even thus, the testimony amounted to nothing. Time was passing dangerously fast, without anything done.

At last, one witness appeared, who alleged that he had heard Jesus say, "Pull down this Temple, it is only the work of man, and I will, in three days, build another, not made with hands."[11] Others agreed that He had said words which seemed intended to bring the Temple into contempt; an offence so grave that it was afterwards made a capital charge against the first martyr, Stephen, that, he had "spoken blasphemous words against this holy place;"[12] but their statements did not tally, and their witness was therefore worthless.

Meanwhile, Jesus had stood silent. Even to charges so hateful to Jewish ears as contempt of the Temple, He had made no answer. He knew it would be idle to speak before such a tribunal, and kept a dignified silence. To the judges, on the other hand, they seemed of the greatest weight. Caiaphas—a true inquisitor—could no longer preserve official calmness. Springing from his couch, and standing up in front of it,[13] he demanded if Jesus had nothing to say

[8] Matt. 27. 64. Luke 23. 2, 5. Mark 15. 11.

[9] Lightfoot, ii. 357.

[10] Luke 23. 2.

[11] Mark 14. 58.

[12] Acts 6. 13.

[13] Mark 14. 60.

in His own defence, against all this. What did His silence mean? Was it a confession of guilt? But He still remained silent. The matter spoke for itself; the testimony given against Him was discordant and worthless. If His past life could not secure His acquittal, mere words were useless. To use His own earlier saying they would be pearls cast before swine, who would turn again and rend Him. Self-conscious and kingly, He bore Himself with a dignity that impressed even His judges. He would let violence and falsehood run their course. He would not recognize the tribunal, nor do honour to its members, for He knew that they were determined that He should die, innocent or guilty, to serve their own ends.

Caiaphas might have closed the examination at this point, and have taken the votes of the Commission. But with quick, hypocritical acuteness, he felt that the charge best sustained was an offence only in Jewish eyes; that the evidence in support of it was open to criticism, and that the silence of the prisoner might not, after all, be an admission of guilt. His pride, moreover, was touched by such a bearing towards himself, the primate, and he would force an answer, if possible, to save his own dignity. It would, besides, be better to go no further into matters which might protract the sitting, and spoil the plot, by letting morning return before Jesus was in the safe hands of the Romans. True to the serpent-cunning of the house of Hannas, he determined to bring things to a head by making Him, if possible, compromise Himself at once with Jewish opinion, and Roman fears. He hoped to worm out what could be distorted into a civil offence, for his keen knowledge of men told him, that, while fitly silent and dignified hitherto, his prisoner would give a frank reply, and reveal His secret thoughts when honour demanded it. For He was evidently about to die, as He had been charged with living, an enthusiast and zealot.

Looking straight at the accused, the mitred hypocrite, in his white robes, with practised official solemnity went at once to the heart of the matter, by the demand, uttered in Aramaic, the common speech of the Jewish courts as of the

CHAP. LXI.

[14] Matt. 26. 63.

nation, "I put you on your oath by the living God[14] whose curse falls on those who swear falsely by Him, and require you to tell us whether you are the Malcha Meschicha—the King Messiah—the Son of God—Ever Blessed?"

The long foreseen moment had come, when an open claim which He had hitherto left to be inferred from His acts and figurative expressions, rather than openly stated, would bring on Him swift sentence of death. Caiaphas knew that many believed Him to be the Messiah; that He Himself had not refused the awful name, but had, rather, in His discourses, justified its being given Him; and, that, a few days before, He had allowed the thousands of Galilæan pilgrims, who greeted His entrance to Jerusalem, to salute Him by it. But the ecclesiastical authorities had decided that He neither was, nor could be, the Messiah, and, hence, in their eyes, His claiming openly to be so would be a *crimen læsæ majestatis*—blasphemous high treason, against the true Sovereign of the Land—Jehovah. He had hitherto evaded a direct answer, except in rare cases, because the time had not yet come for His openly declaring Himself. To have done so before all hope of longer life was past, would have been to have cut short His public work in founding His Kingdom.

But the supreme moment had now arrived. With kingly dignity, in the face of certain death for His words, and in solemn answer to the appeal to "the living God" as to their truth, Jesus calmly replied to the adjuration:—"If I tell you, ye will not believe, and if I ask questions that would prove my highest claims you would not answer. Thou hast said the Truth—I AM the Malcha Meschicha—the King Messiah—the Son of God, and Son of Man. In my present guise ye will see me no more; but when ye have slain me, I, the Son of Man, will forthwith sit on the right hand of the Majesty of God, and when ye see me next it will be sitting there, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

This declaration might have seemed sufficiently explicit, but the excitement of the judges, true Orientals, had grown ungovernable. Rising on their cushions, one and all demanded, with loud voices, "Art Thou, then, the Son of God?" "You have said it,"[a] replied Jesus, "AND I AM."

Caiaphas had gained his end. Hearing witnesses would have required time, and the whole scheme would have miscarried, if Jerusalem woke and the Galilæan pilgrims learned, while a rescue was still possible, the secret arrest through the night, of their fellow-countryman, whom many of them esteemed a prophet of Jehovah, if not the very Messiah.

Caiaphas played his part well. Quivering with passion, and triumphant at his success, he forgot the practised coldness of the Sadducee, and once more springing from his couch with well-feigned horror at the words of Jesus, though they were precisely what he had wished, rent the bosom of his priestly robe of fine linen, as if it were too narrow to let him breathe, after hearing such blasphemy. He forgot that it was the worst of blasphemy for his own lips to use the name of Jehovah as a mere cloak for crime and wickedness! Jesus had spoken with the calmness of truth and innocence. He had applied to Himself words of Daniel, and of the Psalms,[15] universally understood of the Messiah, and had predicted His sitting henceforth with Jehovah on the throne of heaven, and descending in divine majesty to judge the earth, though, while He spoke, He was at the very threshold of a shameful death.

[15] Dan. 7. 13. Ps. 110. 1; 8. 4.

"He has blasphemed!" cried Caiaphas. "What need is there to hear more witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy from His own lips. He gives Himself out as the true Messianic Son of God, which we have already decided He is not. What seems good to you, my colleagues?"

In an irregular, illegal, self-constituted court, whose members had already approved the cold-blooded counsel of Caiaphas, to put the prisoner out of the way, guilty or innocent; and thus quench the fire He had kindled, in His own blood, no evidence or want of it could have secured an acquittal. Too many private and class grudges, and too many vested rights, lent weight to any pretext for a judicial murder. The very humility and the purely spiritual aims of Jesus were, themselves, a deadly offence; for their Jewish pride flattered itself that the Messiah would wield supernatural powers to restore the old Theocracy, and make Israel

CHAP. LXI.

the head of the nations instead of hated Rome. Then, was He not a Galilæan—one of a race they despised? It might be true that He wrought miracles, but one who wilfully broke the Law, as He openly did, by Sabbath healing—and *who* knew what else?—must work them by help from Beelzebub, not Jehovah.

And, besides, had not the high priest told them that it was no great harm if a single man were put out of the way, even if innocent, for the common good? When, moreover, did ferocious bigotry fail to identify its cry for blood with pious zeal for the glory of God?

All voted that further investigation was useless: that on His own confession Jesus was worthy of death.

They had, at last, their wish. All charges affecting the Temple, or Judaism, would have raised only the contemptuous laugh of the Roman procurator. But now that Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah, He could be represented to Pilate as a State criminal, delivered up for an attempt against the imperial rights of Tiberius.

The formal, preliminary examination was over, but its result needed to be confirmed by a larger gathering of the hierarchy. It was about three o'clock in the morning, and some hours must elapse before the sentence could be formally ratified.

Meanwhile, Jesus was left in charge of the rough Temple police, while the judges separated for an hour or two of sleep. There was nothing, now, to restrain the coarse natures to whom the condemned prisoner had been consigned. One under sentence of death was always, in these rough ages, the sport and mockery of his guards,[16] and those in charge of Jesus, made worse than common by the example of the judges, vented their cruelty on Him with the coarsest brutality. Their passions, indeed, intensified their bitterness, for they were fierce Jewish bigots. He was to die as a false prophet, and as such they treated Him, racking their ingenuity to invent insult and injury. Having blindfolded Him, some struck Him violently on the head with their fists, or perhaps with the vine-stick, which Roman centurions[17] and other officials carried as their sign of rank,

16 Sepp, vi 178.

17 Juv. Sat. viii 247.

and were wont to use on the face or head of the soldiers; for some of the captors of Jesus had such staves with them—others struck Him with their open hands, while still others, adding the greatest indignity an Oriental could offer, spat in His face; crying, as they insulted and tortured Him,—"Prophesy to us, thou Messiah, who was it that did it?" The hands they had bound had healed the sick, and raised the dead; the lips they smote had calmed the winds and the waves. One word, and the splendours of the Mount of Transfiguration would have filled the chamber; one word, and the menials now sporting with Him at their will would have perished. But, as He had begun and continued, He would end—as self-restrained in the use of His awful powers on His own behalf as if He had been the most helpless of men. Divine patience and infinite love knew no wearying. He had but to will it and walk free, but He came to die for man, and He would do it.

While His examination had been proceeding, the central court, which seems to have been paved, was the waiting place of the servants of the several judges, and of the underlings of the high priest and the Temple watch. John and Peter, recovering from their first panic, and anxious to see what became of their Master, had followed at a distance, till He was brought to the house of Caiaphas. The door of the outer court, or porch, had been closed, to prevent the entrance of any one likely to spread an alarm and bring about a rescue, but John, happening to be known to the household, or, perhaps, to the high priest himself, was readily admitted. Meanwhile, Peter remained shut out, but at John's solicitation was presently admitted by the maid who kept the door.

A fire of wood kindled in the open court in the chilly April night, had attracted all round it, Peter among the rest, by its cheerful blaze. He sat, with weary heart, by the light, wondering what the end would be, and not without alarm for his own safety, in case he should be recognized, and charged with his violence in the garden. Meanwhile, the door-keeper, who, perhaps, had seen him in attendance on Jesus in the Women's Court of the Temple, sauntered,

like others, to the fire, and with a woman's abruptness, after gazing at him steadily, put the question directly to him—"Art thou, also, one of this man's disciples?" Confused and off his guard, he said nothing, but she would not let him go. "Thou, also, wast with Jesus of Galilee," she continued—repeating to those round her, "Certainly this man, also, was with Him." "Woman," said Peter, stammering out the words in mortal terror for his life, "I do not know Him; I do not know what you mean." But his conscience was ill at ease, and his fears grew apace. He could no longer hide his confusion, and went off into the darkness of the porch. His inexorable inquisitor would not, however, let him escape. He had hardly come to the light again, after a time, when she once more scanned him, and, determined to justify herself, began to speak of him to the serving men and slaves. "He *is* one of them. He *was* with Jesus of Nazareth." Irritated and alarmed, and losing all presence of mind, he repeated his denial with an oath. "I do not know the man. I am not one of His disciples. I swear I am not."

His stout assertions gave him an hour's respite and peace, but his troubles were not over, for the maid had fixed attention on him, and his bearing had excited suspicion. At last, one of the slaves of the high priest, a kinsman of the wounded Malchus, renewed the subject by asking Peter directly—"Did I not see thee, as I was standing at the door of the garden, just as they were coming out?" "You never did," said Peter. "I was not there." "Why, your very speech shows that you are of them—you *were* with Him," cried angry, fierce voices, "you are a Galilæan—we hear it in your words."

Peter, now, lost all control of himself. He had tried to strengthen his last denial by a solemn oath, but now burst into curses and imprecations on himself, if he had not spoken truth, in saying that he knew nothing whatever about Jesus! In the midst of his excitement the sound of a cock-crow fell on his ears, and, at the sound, his Master, still before His murderers, in a room opening into the courtyard, turned and looked him full in the face, with those loving, but now,

no less reproachful eyes, in the light of which Peter had so long found his sweetest joy.

It was enough. The glance, like lightning, revealing an abyss, brought back to its nobler self the honest heart that for a time had been alarmed into superficial unfaithfulness, and threw an awful brightness into the depths of sin on whose edge he stood. All his unmanly weakness and wretched fear rose in his thoughts, and, with them, the remembrance of his boastings, so miserably belied. Christ's words, which he had so warmly repudiated—that, before the cock crew, he would deny Him thrice, had come true. What a contrast between the grand strength of his Master, and his own weakness!

Matt. 26. 57, 58, 69—75. Mark 14. 53, 54, 66—72. Luke 22. 54—62. John 18. 13—18, 25—27.

Shame and sorrow; mingled, on the moment, with a yearning hope of forgiveness, overpowered him, and he did, now, what he should have done earlier; went out, and wept bitterly. It is a touching, and beautiful tradition, true to the sincerity of his repentance, if not as a historical reality, that, all his life long, the remembrance of this night never left him, and that, morning by morning, he rose at the hour when the look of his Master had entered his soul, to pray once more for pardon.

Towards the close of the fourth watch, and before day-break, the heads of the theocracy, true to precedent, which required that the whole Sanhedrim, while it existed, should meet to ratify a sentence of death, had extemporized a semblance of the old High Court of the Nation in some suitable building. Thither Jesus was now led, under escort of Temple police and retainers of the high priest; to appear before the notables of Israel. The chiefs of the priestly courses, and other dignitaries of the Temple, with a number of elders and Rabbis, had gathered in the fading darkness, old though most of them were, to take part in the condemnation of the Hated One. The proceedings were, however, only formal; to hear the sentence of the Commission and to endorse it. This done, the way was clear for handing Him over to Pilate.

In the eyes of those who, thus, unanimously confirmed the fatal sentence, He was a criminal of the worst dye; for, in

their opinion, He had blasphemed with audacious boldness, by claiming to be the King Messiah, the Son of God, the long-expected deliverer of the nation, sent to it from heaven. No one had ever before laid claim to the sacred name, for, though many Messiahs rose in later years, no one, as yet, had assumed the tremendous dignity. Proof more than enough to establish His highest claims, offered itself in His life, and words, and works, but passion and prejudice had hardened their hearts, and blinded their judgments. The worst among them would never have dared to proceed against Him, had they believed Him really the Messiah. "I know," says St. Peter, "that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers."[18] But it was the ignorance that had refused the light. Had they been honest and honourable, the first point to have been settled would have been, at least to hear what the Accused had to say in His own favour. They had constituted themselves the vindicators of the Law and the Prophets, and it was their elementary duty to hear the prisoner's exposition of the statements of both, respecting the matter in hand. He had owned Himself the Messiah, and for doing so, without giving Him the opportunity of supporting His claim, they voted the sentence of death, by noisy acclamation. Law and tradition demanded a second full hearing of the case,[19] but they thrust both aside, in their zeal to get Him condemned.

[18] Acts 3. 17.

[19] Keim, iii. 346.

## CHAPTER LXII.

### BEFORE PILATE.



THE decision of the Jewish authorities having been duly signed and sealed, and Jesus once more securely bound, He was led off, strongly guarded from rescue, to the official residence of Pilate, on Mount Zion. It was still early, but Eastern life anticipates the day, for the heat of noon requires rest during the hours busiest with us. The way ran from the West Hall of the Temple over the Tyropœon by a bridge, and across the open space of the Xystus, with its pillared porches. The palace of Herod, now Pilate's head-quarters, lay just beyond—the proud residence of the Roman knight who held the government for the Emperor Tiberius. It was inhabited for only a few weeks or days at a time, but now, during the Passover, the Procurator took care to be present; to repress, at once, any popular movement for national freedom, which the spring air, the feast itself, and the vast gathering of the nation, might excite.

Now, for the first time, Jesus entered the gates of a king's palace; the home of "men in soft raiment"—entered it as a prisoner. He was to stand before a man who has come down to us as one of the most unrighteous, cruel, arbitrary, and hateful; a man rightly named Pilate—the "Javelinman"—for it seemed his delight to launch cruelties and scorns on every side, like javelins, among the oppressed people. What had Jesus to expect from one who hated the nation from his soul, and sported with their lives and possessions as if they were not men, but a lower race of despised slaves and fanatical Helots? It might, indeed, be of benefit to Him that the hatred of Pilate towards the

Matt. 27. 1. 2 11—14. Mark 15. 1—5. Luke 23. 1—5. John 18. 28—38

Jews, might regard Him as a welcome instrument, in the absence of a better, for playing off his bitterness against them and their leaders. To favour a man who was in opposition to them, was, itself, a pleasure. Calm, temperate, and impartial, compared to Jewish passion and bitterness, and in some respects in sympathy with the accused, the hard, proud, heathen Roman was more open to the impression of Christ's innocence or harmlessness, than the Jews or their leaders.

That he did not permanently protect Him, rose, partly, from his character, and, partly, from his past history as procurator. Morally enervated and lawless, the petty tyrant was incapable of a strong impression or righteous firmness, and, besides, he dreaded complaints at Rome, from the Jewish authorities, and insurrections of the masses in his local government. He had, in the past, learned to fear the unconquerable pertinacity of the Jews and the rebukes of the Emperor, so keenly, that he would permit, or do, almost anything, for quiet. This showed itself in his bearing towards Jesus. Protecting Him for a time, half in sympathy, half in mockery, he gave Him up in the end, rather than brave the persistent demand of a people he hated and feared. He would have set Him free, but for the popular clamour, and a bitter remembrance of the trouble it had already given him in Jerusalem and at Rome.[1]

[1] Keim, iii. 362, 363.

There was a hall in the palace, in which trials were generally conducted, but the Jewish notables, who had condemned Jesus, were much too holy to enter a heathen building during the feast, since there might be old leaven in it. It was Friday, and the Sabbath began that night, and in the evening there was universally at this season a supplementary feast of priests and people, on the flesh of the free-will offerings. It had, for centuries, been associated with the Passover and was thought a part of it, and Levitical uncleanness would prevent the accusers taking part in it.[a] They were still true to the character given them by Jesus; careful of the outside of the bowl and platter, but willing that, within, it should be filled with wickedness. They had effected their end. Jesus was in the hands of the Romans, before Jerusalem awoke.

Knowing the people with whom he had to do, Pilate made no attempt to overcome their scruples. Trials in the open air were common, for Roman law courted publicity. Roman governors, and the half Roman Herod and his sons, erected their tribunals, indifferently, before the palace, in the market-place, in the theatre, in the circus, or, even, in the highways.[b] Pilate, therefore, caused his official seat to be set down on a spot known, in Jerusalem, as Gabbatha—the high place,[c]—from its being raised above the crowd, and as "The Pavement," because it was laid, according to Roman custom, where judges sat, with a mosaic of coloured stones. It was, very possibly, a permanent erection, square, or of crescent shape, of costly marble, in keeping with the splendour so dear to Herod, its builder; projecting from the front of the "Judgment Hall," in the palace, and easily accessible by a doorway from it. It was a maxim of Roman law that all criminal trials should be held on a raised tribunal, that all might see and be seen.[2]

The ivory curule chair of the procurator—his seat of state, and sign of office; or, perhaps, the old golden seat of Archelaus, was set down on the tesselated floor of the tribunal, which was large enough to let the assessors of the court—Roman citizens—who acted as nominal members of the judicial bench, sit beside Pilate—for Roman law required their presence. On lower elevations, sat the officers of the court, friends of the procurator, and others whom he chose to honour.

The priests and elders who appeared against Jesus, now led Him up the steps of the tribunal, to the procurator, and set Him before him.[3] Seats were generally provided for the accusers near the judge, and there was, also, usually, a seat for the accused; but in Judea, despised and insulted, this custom was not now observed, at least, so far as regarded Jesus, for He had to stand through the trial. An interpreter was not needed, as the Jewish officials doubtless spoke Greek, and Jesus, brought up in Galilee, where the presence of foreigners made its use general, necessarily understood it. A strong detachment of troops from the garrison guarded the tribunal, and kept the ground,[4] for a vast

[2] Tholuck, Ev. Johan. 313. Winer, *Art.* "Lithostrōton." Bibel Lex.. *Art.* "Gabbatha." Luthardt, Evan. Johan. ii. 410. Lücke, Evan. Johan. ii. 487.

[3] Dict. of Ant., *Art.* "Basilica." Keim, iii. 366.

[4] Matt. 27. 27. See Bell. Jud. ii. 14. 8, 9.

CHAP. LXII.

crowd of citizens and pilgrims speedily gathered, as the news of the arrest spread.[5]

[5] Matt. 27. 20.

Roman law knew nothing of the inquisitorial system by which a prisoner might be forced to convict himself; it required that a formal accusation of a specific offence should be made against him. This office of accuser, Caiaphas, dispensing with the customary employment of an "orator,"[6] himself, apparently, performed, as the representative of the nation, and its highest dignitary; to give the charges the greater weight.[7]

[6] Acts 24. 1. Jos. Ant. xvi. 2. 3.

[7] Matt. 27. 12.

Pilate, having taken his seat, began the proceedings by formally asking Caiaphas and his colleagues what accusation they had against the prisoner.[8]

[8] John 18. 29.

"If He had not been a great offender," replied Caiaphas, as spokesman, "we would not have delivered Him up to thee. We have power enough to punish ordinary offenders, by our own laws, but this man's crime goes beyond our powers in the punishment it demands, and, therefore, we have handed Him over to you.[9] That we have done so, I submit, is proof that He deserves death. The presence of myself, the high priest, and of the notables of the nation, as His accusers, may suffice to prove the blackness of His guilt."

[9] John 18. 30.

Pilate was not a stranger in Palestine, and had, doubtless, had Jesus already under his notice, through reports of his spies and officials. He had learned that He avoided all appeals to force; that His discourses had nothing whatever political in them, and that His zeal was mainly directed against the corruptions of the Jewish priesthood and public teachers, whom the Romans themselves despised for the same cause. The immense crowds that had followed Him, at His first appearance in Judea, three years before, and His subsequent course in Galilee, must have been the subject of many official communications to Cæsarea, Pilate's usual residence; and they had uniformly represented Him as peaceful and harmless. Pilate knew, therefore, that He was now delivered up by the priests and Rabbis only from envy,[10] and for their own selfish ends. From all he had learned, Jesus was only a well-meaning enthusiast, and he could easily see

[10] Mark 15. 10.

how such a man might well be dangerous to the vested interests and mock holiness of the Jewish magnates, but not at all so to Roman authority. He was ready enough to quench in blood any religious movement that threatened the peace, but he saw no ground for apprehension as regarded this one.

The Gospels give only a brief outline of the whole trial, but even the opening address of Caiaphas, or the orator who spoke for him and his colleagues, was, no doubt, full of rhetorical compliments to Pilate himself, and of fierce words against the prisoner. It had, however, a very different effect on Pilate from that intended. The hypocritical clamour for blood by a priesthood whom he despised as Jews, and, still more, for their superstition, bigotry, barbarous want of taste and culture, restless greed, and restive opposition to Rome, was hateful and repulsive. He would not involve his court, which represented the majesty of the Emperor, in any further details of a question about one who seemed a mere religious reformer. The accusers had, themselves, jurisdiction in their own religious disputes.

Interrupting the speaker, therefore, Pilate told him—"If you have found Him what you say, you had better, in my opinion, take Him, and judge Him according to your own law."[11] If they did not trouble him further, he would not interfere with them. He had not, as yet, understood that they sought to have Jesus put to death, but fancied they wished some other punishment.

[11] John 18. 31.

Caiaphas had his answer ready. "It is a *criminal* charge," said he, "a charge of capital crime, and we cannot put any one to death, without your confirming our sentence."[12] He could not, however, confirm any sentence, without, at least, a summary investigation, and, thus, the matter must proceed before him. They might have stoned Jesus for blasphemy, had he sanctioned their doing so, but they were resolved to leave the odium of the murder on him, and have their victim crucified. In the fulfilment of the divine counsels, He was to die, not as a martyr to Jewish fury, but as a sin-offering, on the Cross.

[12] John 18 31,32

"What is your accusation then?" asked Pilate.

CHAP. LXII.

Craftily keeping out of sight Christ's declaration that He was the Son of God, because such a theological question was indifferent to the Roman, and because heathenism had no such ideas connected with the phrase as Judaism, Caiaphas turned the religious offence into a political one. The "Son of God," in a Jewish sense, was equivalent to the Messiah, the expected national deliverer, and, hence, he created out of the claim, a pretension to earthly royalty. Such an accusation could not be overlooked, and must wake prejudice, if believed, as involving a charge of treason against the suspicious and relentless Tiberius. The priests expected an instant condemnation, for they knew Pilate's hyæna-like nature.

Roman law permitted the questioning of a prisoner after formal accusation, and confession of the charge was held sufficient proof of guilt.

"The accused has been condemned by us as a deceiver of the people," answered the high priest.[13]

[13] Luke 23. 2.

"How?" asked Pilate.

"In a double way," said Caiaphas. "He stirs up the nation against paying their tribute to Cæsar, and He sets Himself up as king of the Jews. He says He is the Messiah, which is the name we give our king, and He has led many to regard Him as a descendant of David, and our only lawful sovereign."

Jesus was standing at Pilate's side. Rising from his chair and ordering Him to be brought after him, he retired into the palace, and calling Jesus before him, asked Him—"Art *Thou* the king of the Jews? Dost Thou, really, claim to be so?" He evidently expected a disavowal, for he felt it almost beneath him to ask such a question of one, in his eyes, so utterly unlike a king. Had he been firm and strong-minded, he would have seen the groundlessness of the charge, from the absence of all overt proof, but he weakly proceeded to compromise himself, by putting Jesus to examination.

Knowing that Pilate had nothing against Him but the words of His enemies outside, Jesus, with a calm dignity that must have amazed the procurator, asked him a counter

question. "Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others told it you of me?"[14] He would have Pilate remember the more than doubtful source of the accusation, and that with all his official means of information, no grounds of such a charge had ever suggested themselves to his own mind. It was, besides, essential to know if he spoke as a Roman, with a political use of the title "king," or repeated it in the Jewish sense, as equivalent to "the Messiah."[15]

[14] John 18. 34.

[15] Ewald, v. 368 Neander's Leben Jesu, 460. Luthardt, ii. 397. Paulus, iii. 226.

"Do you think *I* am a *Jew?*" answered Pilate, scornfully, feeling his false position, in entertaining an accusation from so suspicious a source. "Your own nation have brought you before me; the charge comes from the priests and Rabbis. I have only repeated their accusation. What do I care for your dreams about a Messiah? Tell me, what have you done? Do you call yourself the king of the Jews?"

"In your sense of the word I am not a king," answered Jesus, "but in another, I am. My accusers expect a mere earthly, world-conquering Messiah. But my Kingdom is not of this world[16]—not earthly and political. If it were, my attendants would have fought for me, to prevent my being arrested and delivered up to my enemies by the soldiers you sent against me. But they made no resistance nor any attempt even to rescue me, and this, of itself, is enough to show that my Kingdom is not a political one."

[16] John 18. 36.

"You speak of a kingdom: are you really a king, then, in any *other* sense than the common?" asked the procurator, awed before the Mysterious Man.

"Thou sayest it:[17] so it is: I AM a KING," answered Jesus. "I was born to be a king; I came into the world that I should bear witness for The Truth." He spoke in His lofty, mystic way of the divine Truth He had seen and heard in a former existence, when in the bosom of the Father. "All who love and seek the Truth," he continued —"that is, who hear and obey my words—are my subjects." He had thrice claimed a Kingdom, and thrice told Pilate that it was not of this world.

[17] Matt. 27. 11. Mark 15. 2. Luke 23. 3. John 18. 37

"How these Jews talk!" thought Pilate. "They, barbarous

CHAP. LXII.

as they are, think they have TRUTH as their special possession—TRUTH, which is a riddle insoluble to our philosophers! What have I to do with such speculations, fit only to confuse the head of a hungry Greek or a beggarly Rabbi?" But he had heard enough to convince him that Jesus had no thought of treason against Rome, or of stirring up a disturbance in the country. Hardened, cold, worldly, he felt how awful goodness is, and would fain have dismissed One so strangely different from other men—an enthusiast, willing to die to make men better! "What kind of a man is He?" thought the Roman. "If He only had not been so ready with His talk about being a king! But He will do nothing to help Himself!" "What is Truth?" said he, ironically, and turned away without waiting an answer, for in Pilate's opinion, as in that of most men of his class in that age, Truth was an airy nothing, a mere empty name.[18]

Leaving Jesus to be brought out after him to the tribunal again, he returned to the accusers and the multitude. Touched by the prisoner's self-possession and dignity: half-afraid of One who spoke only of Truth, and of other worlds than this; and incensed that the hierarchy should, for their own ends, have sought to palm off a harmless enthusiast on him, as a dangerous traitor; he threw the priests and Rabbis into fierce confusion, by frankly telling them "that he had examined Jesus, and found no ground for any punishment[19] in His thinking Himself the Messiah, as they called it." One point in the accusation had failed, but it was necessary to hear what might be alleged besides. The accusers could easily see that, in spite of the admission of Jesus that He claimed to be a king, Pilate regarded him rather with pity than fear. More must be done, to fix on Him the crime of being dangerous to the State. The priests and Rabbis were greatly excited. One after another, they sprang up, with charge on charge, to confirm their main accusation. In their fierce bigotry and unmeasured hatred, they had not scrupled to speak of a purely religious movement as a dark political plot, and now they were bold enough even to adduce proofs of this treason. "He has perverted women and children, and has systematically stirred up the whole nation against Cæsar; from

[18] Lücke, ii. 480. Neander, 460. Meyer, *in loc.* Luthardt, ii. 401.

[19] John 18. 38.

Galilee to Jerusalem there is not a town or village in the land, where He has not won over some, and filled them with wild expectations. He has appealed to the nation to join His Kingdom ; He has spoken against paying the taxes; He is a second Judas the Gaulonite, and you know what *his* career has cost Rome, in blood and treasure." The hypocrites! They were hunting Jesus to death simply because He would not identify Himself with them, and use His supernatural power to drive out the Romans, and set them on the vacant throne.[20] They were demanding His death on the pretext that He had threatened to use *force* to establish His Kingdom, when the truth was—His real offence, in their eyes, was that He would *not* use force!

[20] Luke 23. 4, 5.

Such a storm of accusations and suspicions might well have led Pilate to expect some denial or disproofs from Jesus. He doubtless attributed all the difficulty of the situation to His too ready admission of His dreamy kingship; and, on every ground, even for his own sake, to clear him from a business that grew more and more serious, hoped to hear some defence. But Jesus knew with whom He had to do. He knew that His enemies were determined that He should die, and would invent charge after charge till He was destroyed. They had already scrupled at nothing. He knew Pilate—fierce, and yet cowardly, with no moral force; the tyrant, and yet the sport of the Jewish authorities.[21] The majesty of truth and goodness in Him looked down with a pitying disdain on the moral worthlessness of judge and accusers alike, and would not stoop to utter even a word in His own behalf, before them. They knew His life and work, and if the witness *they* bore were of no weight, He would add no other. "If *I* demand that He answer," thought Pilate, "perhaps He will do so." "Do you not hear," said he, "how many things they accuse you of? Do you make no defence at all?" But Jesus remained silent, not uttering even a word. "A very strange man," thought Pilate. He seemed to him more than ever a lofty enthusiast, blind to His own interests, and careless of life.

[21] Matt. 27. 12—14. Mark 15. 3—5.

The word "GALILEE," in the wild cries of the priests and Rabbis, raised a new hope in Pilate's mind. Antipas was

now in Jerusalem, at the feast. If Jesus were a Galilæan, it would be a graceful courtesy to send Him to be tried, as a Galilæan, before His own prince, and would perhaps efface the grudge Antipas had at himself, for having let loose his soldiers lately on the Galilæan pilgrims in the Temple, during a disturbance, and by cutting some down, even at the altar:—a sore scandal in the Jewish world. It would, moreover, get him clear of a troublesome matter, and, perhaps, it might even save the strange man—so calm, so dignified, in circumstances of such weakness and humiliation; with such a look, as if He read one's soul; with such a mysterious air of greatness, even in bonds, and in the very face of death by the Cross. Antipas would not likely yield to the Temple party, as he himself might be forced to do, to avoid another complaint to Rome. He no sooner, therefore, heard that Jesus was a Galilæan, than he ordered Him to be transferred to Antipas, that he might judge Him as such.

The old palace of the Asmoneans, in which Antipas lodged, was a short way from Pilate's splendid official residence.[22] It lay a few streets off, to the north-east, within the same old city wall, on the slope of Zion, the levelled crest of which was occupied by the vast palace of Herod, now the Roman head-quarters. Both were in the old, or upper city, and through the narrow streets—with raised pathways, and middle sunk to prevent defilement to passers-by—Jesus was now led, under escort of a detachment of the Roman troops on duty. The accusers had no choice but to follow, and the multitude went off with them, for it was no ordinary spectacle, to see the high priest and all the great men of the city, thus, in public, together.

[22] Luke 23. 6—12.

The vassal king was caught in Pilate's snare. The flattery of referring a Galilæan case to him as the Galilæan tetrarch, greatly pleased him, and his light superficial nature was no less gratified by having One of whom he had heard so much, brought before him. In his petty court, amidst all its affectation of grandeur and state, ennui hung like a drowsiness over all. He had never seen a miracle, and should like to be able to say he had. It would break the monotony of a day, and give an hour's languid talk. A prisoner, in danger

of the Cross, could not refuse to humour him, if he commanded Him to perform one! He had been afraid of Jesus once, but a miracle-worker in chains, could be only, at best, a clever juggler.

Pilate had taken his seat on his tribunal in the grey dawn, and an hour had passed. It was shortly after six,[23] when Antipas, early astir, like all Orientals, heard the commotion in the courtyard of his palace, and received word that Jesus had been handed over to his authority. A few minutes more, and the prisoner was led into the Court of Justice of the palace, and presently, Antipas made his appearance on the tribunal, on which Jesus was also forthwith placed.

[23] Gresswell, Harm. Evan. 363.

The light, weak, crafty, worthless man, was disposed to be very condescending. He put question after question to Him; whatever his idle curiosity suggested; and doubtless asked that a miracle might be performed there and then. But Jesus was no conjuror or "magus." He was ready to save His life by worthy means, but He would not, for a moment, stoop to anything unworthy. The creature clad in purple before Him was the murderer of John: the slave of a wicked woman; a mean adulterer; and would fain have had His life, as well as that of the Baptist. Jesus felt, therefore, only utter disdain for him, and treated him with withering silence. He might tire himself with questions, but not a word of reply would be vouchsafed. Antipas began to feel that it was no time to indulge his humour, and grew half-alarmed.

The high priests and Rabbis, Caiaphas at their head, would gladly have turned the annoyance of the tetrarch to their own account. When his questions had ceased, they broke out into vehement accusations, forgetful, in their rage, of either their office or their self-respect. But they, too, were met with the same insufferable, contemptuous silence, which gave no chance of fastening anything on their enemy, by any admission of His own. Antipas was no less at a loss what to do than Pilate had been. One thing, alone, he had resolved—he would have no part in condemning so mysterious a man. Was he afraid of the large following Jesus already had in Galilee? Was he spell-bound and awed by

CHAP. LXII.

those eyes—that calmness—that more than kingly dignity? Was he afraid of the very power of which he had craved some exhibition? When there was no Herodias at hand to make him the tool of her revenge, he was rather a mere voluptuary, than cruel.[24]

[24] Matt. 14. 9.

Treated so strangely before his courtiers: humbled and baffled, Antipas covered his defeat and alarm, by an affectation of contemptuous ridicule. The harmless fanatical madman who claimed to be a king, would make a fine butt for the humour of his guard. Let them trick Him out as a king, and play at homage to Him, and see how He would bear His shadowy dignities! It was a brave chance for the courtiers to show their manliness by mocking a helpless prisoner! Antipas knew, by this time, Pilate's opinion of the accused, and suspected why he had sent Him. So, officer and common soldier set themselves to amuse their master, by trying their wit on this ridiculous pretender to a crown! Tired at last, nothing remained but to send Him back to Pilate, and let *him* finish what he had begun. Antipas had no desire to meddle further, in what might prove a very troublesome matter. Having, therefore, put a white robe[d] —the Jewish royal colour, on Jesus—as if to show that he had no fear of such a king,[25] he sent Him back to Pilate.

[25] Bengel, Gnomon, *in loc.*

Luke 23. 13—25. Matt. 27. 15—26. Mark 15. 6—15. John 18. 39, 40.

Pilate had already made one vain attempt to save Him, and now, anxious to end the matter, summoned the accusers once more to the tribunal. A great crowd had gathered, mostly of citizens, hostile as such to the alleged enemy of the Temple by which they lived. Looking at Jesus again —standing before him in the humble dress of the people—for they had already stripped Him of His robe of mockery: —Pilate noticed that He showed no trace of fanaticism, in word, bearing, or countenance; and felt more than ever convinced that He was no rebel or dangerous person. "I have examined this man," said he, "and nothing worthy of death has been done by Him. Still more, I sent Him to Herod, and he is of the same opinion, and he has sent Him again to me uncondemned. But since so much trouble has been caused by His fancies, He deserves some punishment. I shall, therefore, order Him to be scourged and then dismissed.

It will be a warning to Him." His offer to scourge Him was a mean salve to the wounded pride of the hierarchy, for his refusing their demand for a sentence of death.



Meanwhile, a cry arose in the crowd, which was destined to have momentous results. It was the custom to carry out capital sentences at the Feast times, that the people, at large, might get a lesson; but, it was also the practice of the procurators, in compliment to the deliverance of Israel from the slavery of Egypt, commemorated by the Passover, to release any one prisoner condemned to death, whom the multitude might name in the Passover week.

Coming forward, therefore, and addressing both accusers and people, Pilate reminded them of their custom that he should release a prisoner, to them, at the Passover. Cries instantly rose, clamouring that he should do so, as he had always done, and for once the shouts pleased him; for he fancied that, this time, there could be no question who should receive the pardon. One who claimed to be their national king, and had attracted so much notice, would, he assumed, be gladly accepted. Coming forward, therefore, he called out to the people, whether they would like "Jesus, their king," to be the prisoner released to them that year.

It happened that, at this time, there lay, awaiting execution, one Barabbas—the son of a Rabbi [e]—who had, apparently, been compromised through religious fanaticism, in one of the countless petty revolts which incessantly harassed the Romans. He was no common robber, but a zealot, who, in mistaken ardour for the honour of the Law, had taken part in a tumult, during which some Roman sympathizers or soldiers, had been killed.

The proposal of Pilate threatened to overthrow the scheme of the hierarchy, and, unless opposed on the instant, might catch the popular fancy, and be accepted. Caiaphas and his party, therefore, with quick presence of mind, determined to turn attention from it, by raising a counter proposal flattering to local passion. "Ask him to release Barabbas to you, and not this man," shouted they to the mob. It was a dexterous stroke, for Barabbas had been

CHAP. LXII. condemned for an offence which made him a martyr, in the eyes of the people. He had risen against the abhorred Roman. He was a patriot, therefore: a zealot for the Temple and the Law, while Jesus was the enemy of things as they were—of tradition and rites;—and demanded reforms. Caiaphas had no sympathy with the revolutionary fierceness of Barabbas, but it made him only too zealous on the right side, whereas Jesus was the public accuser of the whole priesthood, and of the schools, as well.

The cry for Barabbas was, therefore, raised by the high priests as a cue to the people, and repeated with such vehement urgency that, erelong, it was caught up by the whole crowd, who were presently wild with excitement to have "the patriot" released, instead of Jesus. The public opinion, or voice of a nation, when the result of free expression of opposite judgments, may be the voice of God, but the voice of the unthinking multitude, as the outburst of sudden passion or caprice, seems often that of Satan.[26] Pilate was not required to give the people their choice, but had fancied he might appeal to them as against the priests and Rabbis, and have their approval, as a counterpoise to the opposition of their leaders, and a security for himself with the Emperor. But the high priests kept up the cry for Barabbas so fiercely, and to Pilate's regret, the multitude echoed it with such a wild tumult of voices, that he saw he had failed. "Give us Barabbas," alone was heard. A popular tumult seemed rising. Everything promised another scene like that of the great deputation to Cæsarea, about the standards set up in Jerusalem, when the persistent cries of the multitude were not to be silenced, even by fear of death, and forced Pilate, in the end, to yield.

To add to the governor's perplexity, he had scarcely ascended the judge's seat to receive the decision of the people, and give his sentence in accord with it, when a message came to him from his wife, from the palace behind, which, under the circumstances, must have greatly impressed him. Since the time of Augustus, Roman magistrates had been permitted to take their wives to the provinces,[27] and tradition has handed down the wife of

[26] Paulus, iii. 230.

[27] Tacit. Ann. iii. 33.

Pilate—whose name it gives as Procla—as a proselyte to Judaism.[28] She had evidently heard of Jesus, and, having taken a lively interest in Him, was greatly troubled at His arrest, and present danger. Her messenger, hastening to Pilate's ear, now whispered an entreaty from her. that he would have nothing to do with condemning this just man; she had suffered many things, through the night, in a dream, because of Him—and feared divine vengeance if He were condemned.

[28] Evang. Nicod. cap. 2. Hofmann's Leben Jesu, 338—343.

Pilate—guided only by expediency—was at a loss what to do. Unwilling to give way to the mob, and let loose a fierce enemy of Rome, instead of a harmless, and evidently lofty-minded enthusiast: certain that the high priests had accused Him only from envy at His influence with the people, and hatred of Him for His opposition to themselves: half afraid, moreover, especially after his wife's message, to meddle further in the matter—he, once more, turned to the crowd, who were still shouting—"Not this man, but Barabbas"—and attempted to carry his point, and save Jesus.

"Which of the two," cried he, "do you really wish me to release to you?" "Barabbas, Barabbas," roared the multitude. The cry raised by the priests had carried all before it. "What shall I do then," asked Pilate, pale before the storm, "with Jesus, whom you call the Messiah—the King of the Jews?" He hoped that the sound of titles so dear to their hearts, and so flattering to their pride, would have some effect. But he was bitterly deceived.

For now, for the first time, rose in answer to him, the fearful words—"To the Cross!" "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" —the priests and Rabbis—prelates and doctors of the nation —on the raised platform of the tribunal, shouting first, and the mob, below, presently re-echoing them far and wide.

Pilate had failed twice, but he still held out. Appealing a third time to the excited crowd, he strove to reason with them—

"Why shall I crucify Him? What evil has He done? He has broken no law. I have found no cause, in anything He

CHAP. LXII. has done, to put Him to death. I will, therefore, only scourge Him, and let Him go."

But he knew not the forces he was opposing. Behind the passions of the priests, and Rabbis, and people, were the slowly self-fulfilling counsels of the Eternal!

The sea of upturned faces broke into wild uproar, once more, and a thousand voices cried only, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!"

The six days of Cæsarea, when the same crowds had besieged his palace, with the unbroken cry, which not even imminent death could still[29]—the six days, when their invincible tenacity had forced him to humble himself before them, and let them triumph—rose in Pilate's mind.

[29] Ant. xviii. 3. 1.

"It will be another uproar like that," thought he; "I must yield while I can, and save myself." Poor mockery of a ruler! Set by the Eternal to do right on earth, and afraid to do it: told so by his own bosom: strong enough in his legions, and in the truth itself, to have saved the Innocent One, and kept his own soul—he could only think of the apparently expedient. Type of the politician of all ages, who forgets that only the right is the strong or wise!

Not daring, in his weakness, to play the man, and do right, Pilate was yet determined that even those at a distance, who might not hear his disavowal of any willing share in the condemnation of Christ, should be made to see it. To wash the hands in water is a natural symbol, so expressive of repudiation of responsibility, that it had been adopted by Jews and heathen, alike. So long before as the days of Moses, the elders of a city, near which the body of a slain man had been found, were required to wash their hands over a slaughtered heifer, and declare their innocence. To wash the hands in innocency was already a common expression, in the days of David,[30] and it was familiar to both Greeks and Romans. Calling, therefore, for water, Pilate went towards his official chair, and with significant gestures, washed his hands, calling aloud as he did so, "that as his hands were clean before them, so was he himself, of all guilt in the blood of this man. It is on you; you may answer for it as you best can!"

[30] Ps. 26. 6; 73. 13.

"Yes! yes!" cried the furious priests and rabble, "willingly! we and our children will take the blame! His blood be on us, and our children, if He be slain unjustly."

"Then you may have His blood," thought Pilate; "I have done my best to save Him!" So do men deceive themselves, as if they could wash their conscience clean as easily as their hands! They fancy they have done their utmost for their acknowledged duty, when they have not done precisely the first indispensable and decisive act. They weary themselves, toiling along a thousand crooked ways, which cannot lead them to their end, and turn aside only from the path of unhesitating, immovable, right—the way nearest to them, and the shortest, after all![31]

[31] Paulus, iii. 234.

The Innocent One had gained nothing but evil by all the windings and doublings of the scheming and trimming Roman. Pilate had proposed as a compromise with His accusers, to save His life, by delivering Him over to the shame and agony of scourging, though He had, confessedly, done nothing amiss. He was, now, to be both scourged and crucified.

Victims condemned to the cross first underwent the hideous torture of the scourge, and this was, forthwith, inflicted on Jesus. Pilate, in person, commanded it to be carried out. "Go, bind His hands, and let Him be beaten," was the order for this terrible prelude to crucifixion.

Roman citizens were still exempted, by various laws, from this agonizing and painful punishment, which was employed sometimes to elicit confessions, sometimes as a substitute for execution, and, at others, as the first step in capital sentences. It was in full use in the provinces, and lawless governors did not scruple to enforce it even on Roman citizens, in spite of their protests that they were so.[32] Jesus was now seized by some of the soldiers standing near, and, after being stripped to the waist, was bound in a stooping posture, His hands behind His back, to a post, or low pillar, near the tribunal. He was then beaten till the soldiers chose to stop, with knots of rope, or plaited leather thongs, armed at the ends with acorn-shaped drops of lead, or small, sharp-pointed bones. In many cases not only was the back of the person

[32] Liv. x. 9. Cic. Verr. v. 63. Sen. Ir. iii. 18. Matt. 27. 26—30. Mark 15. 15—19. John 19. 1—3.

 scourged, cut open in all directions: even the eyes, the face, and the breast, were torn and cut, and the teeth not seldom knocked out. The judge stood by, to stimulate the sinewy executioners, by cries of "Give it him"—but we may trust that Pilate, though his office required his presence, spared himself this crime.

Under the fury of the countless stripes, the victims sometimes sank, amidst screams, convulsive leaps, and distortions, into a senseless heap: sometimes died on the spot: sometimes, were taken away an unrecognizable mass of bleeding flesh, to find deliverance in death, from the inflammation and fever, sickness and shame.[33]

[33] Keim, iii. 361. *Arts.* "Leibesstrafen," in Winer and Herzog. Sepp. vi. 239, &c., &c.

The scourging of Jesus was of the severest, for the soldiers employed as lictors, in the absence of these special officials, who were not allowed to procurators, only too gladly vented on any Jew the grudge they bore the nation, and they would, doubtless, try if *they* could not force out the confession, which His silence had denied to the governor. Besides, He was to be crucified, and the harder the scourging the less life would there be left, to keep them on guard at the cross, afterwards. What He must have endured is pictured to us by Eusebius in the epistle of the Church in Smyrna. "All around were horrified to see them (the martyrs)," says he, "so torn with scourges that their very veins were laid bare, and the inner muscles and sinews, and even the very bowels, exposed."[34]

[34] Eusebius, Hist. xv.

The scourging over—Pilate, as his office required, standing by, to hear any confession that might be made,—Jesus was formally delivered over to a military officer with the authorization to see Him crucified. He had been scourged in the open grounds before the palace gate, close to the tribunal, but was now led, still half-naked; with painful, bleeding steps, into the inner court of the palace, in which, as the trial was over, the whole cohort—no longer needed outside—was massed, to be ready for any attempt at rescue. His guards now put some of His clothes[f] on the quivering body. For this His own humble under garments contented them, in part, but the brutal humour of the guard-room was free to vent itself on a condemned man, and the lofty claims

of Christ, and His hated nationality, excited it to the keenest. Instead of His plain abba of linen, therefore, they threw over His shoulders a scarlet sagum, or soldier's cloak—as a rough burlesque of the long and fine purple one, worn only by the Emperor. One of them, running to the nearest open space, heightened the coarse and shameful merriment by bringing in some of the tough twigs of the thorny Nubk, which he twisted into a mock laurel wreath, like that worn at times by the Cæsars, and forced down, with its close sharp thorns, on our Saviour's temples. The Nubk even yet grows, on dwarf bushes, outside the walls of Jerusalem.[35] A fit mockery of a sceptre, to complete the ridicule, was at hand, in one of the long reeds, used in many ways in Jewish houses, and hence easily procured. Placed in His hand, the mock king had a sceptre! It only remained to pay Him a show of homage, and this they did, with mock oaths of allegiance, on their knees, saluting Him, "Hail, King of the Jews." The courtyard rang with peals of laughter. Some of the more brutal could not, however, let things pass so lightly. He was a Jew; He had claimed to be a king, in opposition, as they fancied, to the Emperor, and He was about to be crucified. So they indulged their coarseness by tearing the stout cane-like reed from His hands, and striking Him with it over the face and head. Others struck Him rudely with their fists: some, in their contempt, even spitting on Him as they did so. The scourging had lasted till the soldiers had pleased to end it, and now, their unspeakable brutality was left to wear itself out.

[35] Tristram, 429

This long passage of insult and mockery was one of the sorest trials of these last sad hours. Yet through the whole no complaint escaped His lips. He was being insulted, maltreated, and mocked, as a Jew, while already agonized by the scourging; but if His tormentors had known it, it was because the Jews hated Him that He stood where He was. They ridiculed His claim to the monarchy of the world; but had the soldiery known the truth, it was because He had opposed the Jewish dream of such a monarchy that He was being put to death.

No murmur rose from Him. He might have spoken, or

CHAP. LXII.

sighed, or implored the pity of the soldiery: He might have appealed to their honour and compassion. A heart beats even in the roughest bosom. But He was silent—silent, not because the waves of His sorrows had overwhelmed Him, but in triumphant superiority to them. He had been bowed and crushed in Gethsemane, but now, He showed the serene joy of a conqueror. His silence was a mark of His perfect child-like resignation to the will of His Father. He was fulfilling, by His calm endurance, the work of His life, in accordance with the eternal counsels of God, and in holy love for His nation and the world. His kingly spirit was clouded to human eyes by pain and agony, but the end of His life and death shone out ever more triumphantly before Him. He was dying to destroy for ever the dead and death-causing ritualism of the past; as the founder of a religion of love and freedom and light; and as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world, which would open the gates of mercy to man for evermore!

Pilate had, apparently, retired into the palace for a time, but now re-appeared; urged, perhaps, by his wife Procla, to make one more effort to save Jesus. He might have prevented the pitiful coarseness of the soldiers had he pleased, and the scourging itself was an injustice, by his own confession. He now ordered Him to be brought out once more, tottering with pain and weakness, wearing the scarlet cloak and the crown of thorns, and covered besides with the vile proofs of contempt and violence. Even the stony heart of Pilate was touched.

"Behold," said he, "I have brought Him out to you again, that you may know, once more, that I have found no fault in Him." Then, turning to the figure at his side, drawn together with mortal agony, and looking at the pale, worn, and bleeding face, through which there yet shone a calm dignity and more than human beauty that had touched his heart, and might touch even the heart of Jews, he added—"Behold the man!" Would they let the scourging and mockery suffice, after all?

John 19 4—16.

But religious hatred is the fiercest of all passions. Jesus had been sleepless through the night: worn with anticipa-

tions of the terrible future, and with the sadness of an infinite sorrow: disfigured by the lawless treatment of the palace-yard, and bowed by the torture of the scourging; and now stood, utterly exhausted, before all eyes—yet a form demanding reverence.

But the priests were unmoved. What revenge would satisfy their hatred so long as still more could be had? The sight of their victim redoubled their ferocity. Forgetful of their profession and dignity, the chief priests—the primate and prelates of the day—their servants and the servile crowd echoing their cry—answered the Procurator's appeal only by loud shouts of "Crucify! Crucify!"

"Take ye Him, then, and crucify Him, if it must be so," answered Pilate. "I have found Him blameless of any offence against Roman law for which I could condemn Him." As if he wished to say—"I will not be your mere tool!"

The first accusation had therefore failed, and was dropped. But the priests were determined to have His life, and forthwith demanded it on a new ground.

"He shall not escape with life!" cried their spokesman. "If He has committed no crime worthy of death by Roman law, we have a Jewish law which He has outraged, and by this law He must die. He has claimed to be the Son of God—the Messiah—which He is not, and for that, by our law, which we alone can or dare decide, and which thou hast sworn to uphold, He deserves death;—death by stoning, in any case; death by the cross, if thou allowest it. Thou art bound to uphold our decision, and confirm our sentence."

Thousands were eager, now that the high priests had roused their fanaticism, to put Jesus to death, with Pilate's permission or without.[36] The zealots would do it as a meritorious act. But such an outbreak Pilate dreaded. He would, therefore, have yielded without hesitation, but even to his frivolous soul there was an ominous sound in the name "Son of God." Might he be braving the wrath of the gods, and what, compared to that, was the utmost these wretched Jews could do?

The irresolute man—with no force of character, and too unprincipled to be an upright judge, if the right were not

[36] Acts 23. 12.

CHAP. LXII. first of all, politic—was alarmed. "Perhaps," thought he, "if he brought Jesus before him, privately, once more, a way out of the dilemma would present itself." There was also that dream of Procla's to frighten him.

Retiring, therefore, into the palace, he ordered Jesus to be set before him again.

"What was that they said," asked he, "about Thy being the Son of God? Whence comest Thou? Art Thou of human birth or more?"

No answer which could have revealed the mystery of His nature was possible at such a time. Anything He might have said, however clear, would, moreover, have been unintelligible to the heathen governor, with his utter want of moral earnestness, and would have been fruitless. Jesus therefore remained silent. Pilate had abundant means of judging from the past, and, besides, it was no question of birth or origin, but a simple matter of uprightness he was called on to decide. If his prisoner were innocent, he had a right to be set free, whoever He might be.

Pilate's pride was touched by the silence. His momentary tenderness turned into lowering passion; for power, when it feels itself in the wrong, is the more ready to drown conscience by violence towards the weakness it outrages. "Do you refuse to answer ME?" he asked, in flashing anger. "Do you not know that your life is in my hands, and hangs on my nod? that I can crucify, or release Thee at my pleasure?"

Had he been self-possessed at the moment, and able to ponder things aright, he would have seen an answer to his question, even in Christ's silence. For it is certain that He in whose lips no deceit was ever found, would, on the instant, have honourably confessed that He was only a man, had He been no more. His very silence was a testimony to His divine dignity.[37]

[37] Lücke, ii. 484.

But He was now no longer silent. "You have indeed," said He, "power over me, but you would have none were it not given you from above, from God. But your sin, though great, in condemning me against your conscience, and exercising on me the power granted you by God, is not so great as that of others; for you are only an instrument in His

hands to carry out His counsels. The chief guilt lies on those who have delivered me to you to force you to carry out their will against me. Theirs is the greater sin!" Even in His lowliest humiliation, He is tender and pitiful to the man who has done Him so much wrong, and bears Himself towards him, Roman governor though he be, as if He were the judge and Pilate the prisoner. He has nothing to say of His own agonies or wrongs, but only warning earnestness at the thought of the sin that was being wrought by men against their own souls.

The words, and the whole bearing of Jesus, struck into the heart of the Roman. Presence of mind and self-respectful dignity, even in the most helpless victim of injustice, have an irresistible power over the oppressor. How much more such a unique grandeur as diffused itself round this mysterious man! Pilate was more than ever resolved to release Him. Returning once again to the tribunal, Jesus at his side, he strove to bring the priests and the crowd to content themselves with what their victim had already suffered.

But the priests and Rabbis had hit upon a new terror for the half-righteous judge. Hardly waiting to hear his first words, they raised a cry which they and the mob kept shouting till Pilate was thoroughly alarmed and unnerved. "If you let this man go, you are not true to Cæsar. Any one that makes himself a king, as He has done, declares himself against Cæsar."

Pilate knew the jealous, suspicious character of Tiberius,[38] and feared his displeasure the more, because his conscience told him how he had abused his office by every form of tyranny, so that an appeal to Rome might well be fatal to him. Should he expose himself to the displeasure of the Emperor? He was ready for any act of weak unrighteousness, rather than brave a censure from Capræa, far less the risk of its vengeance. He, doubtless, tried to make himself believe that he could not, in any case, save Christ's life,[39] and flattered himself that he had acted with exceptional uprightness. He must, after all, look to himself, first. Would he bring down on himself a recall; perhaps banishment, or even worse; to save a Jew, because justice demanded his

[38] Suet. Tib. 58. Tacit. Ann. iii 38.

[39] John 19. 7.

doing so? 'Who," doubtless thought the mere politician, "in my position, would dream of committing such a folly? Shall I sacrifice myself for any one? No!"

Furious at the priesthood and the rabble, who kept shouting the hateful insinuation that clemency would be treason to Cæsar, Pilate once more took his official seat. It was, now, about nine o'clock,[g] and he had at last given way, though with bitter mortification. He would not, even yet, however, surrender without one more effort to carry his point, for he was alarmed alike at Jesus and at the Emperor.

Turning to Jesus, still wearing the crown of thorns and the scarlet cloak—in a burst of unconcealed contempt against the Jews, as impolitic as it was useless, he cried—"Behold your king!" The only answer was a hurricane of cries—"Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" "What!" cried Pilate, with keen withering mockery—"shall I crucify your king?" As if to say that one so humiliated and outcast was all the king they deserved or could show.

Caiaphas and Hannas, and the group round them, were, however, more than a match for him. They had an answer ready which would force his hand, if he had any thought of still holding out. "We have no king but Cæsar," rose all round him—"we want no other king!" "The hypocrites," doubtless, thought Pilate, "with the souls of slaves. Tiberius, himself, has not yet ventured to call himself king, or Lord, and these, his mortal enemies; priests too, pretending to be the heads of religion, pay him homage as king, without being asked, only to force me, by their pretended loyalty, to carry out their revenge against one so much better than themselves."

It was Friday; and Sabbath—on which nothing could be done—began at sunset. If the execution were delayed, new difficulties might rise to save Jewish scruples about the desecration of the holy day, by the exposure, during it, of bodies on the cross. Who, moreover, could tell what might follow, if the followers of Jesus rose against His enemies, during this respite, to force a release of their Teacher? Besides, Pilate felt he could not now save Him, and wished the whole matter over as soon and as quietly as possible.

He, therefore, at last, gave the final order for crucifixion.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

### JUDAS—THE CRUCIFIXION.

CHAP. LXIII.

AMONG the spectators of the trial and condemnation, was one who was far enough from joining in the cries of the high priests, and their satellites,—Judas Iscariot.[1] Whatever might have been his thoughts while sustained by excitement, he had no sooner seen Jesus led away by the Roman soldiers from the garden, than all changed. The excitement was over—the whirlwind of evil on which his spirit had for the time ridden, was spent, and in its place had come the awful calm of retrospect and reflection. He was no longer needed by his employers, and found himself, lately so flattered and followed, now cast ignominiously aside, as the traitor he was. The great moon, the silent night, his loneliness, after such agitation, the sudden breaking up of the past, the vision of the three years now so tragically ended; echoes and remembrances of the love and divine goodness of the Master he had betrayed; a sudden realization of the infinite future; with its throne, its unerring Judge,—the assembled universe, the doom of the guilty, and the joy of the faithful, acted and reacted on his heart and brain.

[1] Matt. 27. 3—10 Acts 1. 18, 19.

It may be he had stood, pale with remorse and anxiety, through all the incidents of the trial, hoping, against hope, that his Master would at last put forth His supernatural power, and deliver Himself, as perhaps he had expected. It is quite possible that Judas had acted as he had done, to precipitate a crisis, and force Jesus to such a display of His power, as would, even against His will, force on Him the assumption of the worldly Messianic dignity, from which the unhappy fallen man had dreamed of political greatness, and rich official state for himself.

CHAP. LXIII.

To his unspeakable horror, he had found all his calculations miscarry. Perhaps after waiting amongst the crowd before Pilate, as well as at the gate of the high priest, he had heard the shouts of the priests and the mob,—the sound of the knout falling on the bleeding back—the awful demand for THE CROSS—that image of lowest degradation and extremest agony—and last of all, the fatal utterance of Pilate—"I, miles, expedi crucem,"—"Go, soldier, prepare the cross." They had fallen in a Sodom-like fire-rain on his soul, and he felt himself already the accursed of time and eternity. The light of life passed into the darkness visible of despair. Which way he looked was hell; himself was hell.

Hurrying to the Temple with his wretched gain, for which he had bartered away his inheritance of one of the twelve thrones of the resurrection, and an apostle's glory here, in the heavenly kingdom his Master had founded,—he sought to thrust it back again on the priests from whom he had got it, as the wages of his guilt—paid beforehand, to quicken his zeal. But though willing to prop up their Temple system by murder, they would on no account, compromise their own ceremonial purity, or that of the sacred treasury, by taking back the coin, which they themselves had polluted, by paying it as the price of crime. They could see the stain of the blood on the shekels, but not on their own souls. Judas had served their purpose, and was nothing to them now. He had in his agony pressed into the very court of the priests, where they were gathered—ground sacred to consecrated feet. "Would they do nothing yet, to save his Master? He had not expected they would go to such awful extremes. Jesus was innocent. All he had said against Him was untrue. Would they not for their holy office sake, for the sake of the holy spot on which they then were, undo the awful crime?"

He might as well have spoken to the marble pavement on which they stood, with bare feet, in reverence of the Holy of Holies close by. The stone was not more impassive than their hearts. "What is it to us," answered they, "what you have done? That is your own affair. See you to it." But

if he could not move them, he could at least clear himself, so far, by casting back among them the money with which they had hired him.[2] Throwing it down on the pavement, therefore, he went out, perhaps in the darkness of early morning—for possibly he did not wait for the last acts of the trial, but had been overwhelmed by the condemnation of Jesus by the Jewish authorities—and hanged himself in a spot of ground, till then known as the clay-yard of a potter of the town, but thenceforth as the Field of Blood. Nor was even this the end, for the cord by which he had suspended himself gave way, and he fell beneath, ruptured and revolting.

[2] Matt. 27. 3—10. Acts 1. 18, 19.

To put money, defiled from any cause, into the treasury was unlawful. To what could the authorities apply it? How, better, than to buy the worn-out clay pit, already defiled by the suicide of Judas, for the further defilement of a graveyard. There was need of a spot in which to bury foreign Jews, who might die in Jerusalem. So the scene of the traitor's death became doubly a "field of blood."[a]

Meanwhile, preparations were being rapidly made for crucifixion.[3]

[3] Matt. 27. 31—38. Mark 15. 20—28. Luke 23. 26—38. John 19. 16—22.

Death by the cross was the most terrible and the most dreaded and shameful punishment of antiquity—a punishment, the very name of which, Cicero tells us, should never come near the thoughts, the eyes, or ears, of a Roman citizen, far less his person.[4] It was of Eastern origin, and had been in use among the Persians and Carthaginians,[5] long before its employment in Western countries. Alexander the Great adopted it in Palestine, from the Phenicians, after the defence of Tyre, which he punished by crucifying two thousand citizens, when the place surrendered.[6] Crassus signalized its introduction into Roman use by lining the road from Capua to Rome with crucified slaves, captured in the revolt of Spartacus,[7] and Augustus finally inaugurated its general use, by crucifying six thousand slaves at once, in Sicily, in his suppression of the war raised by Sextus Pompeius.[8]

[4] Pro Rabirio, c. 5.

[5] Herod. iii. 126 Polyb. i. 86.

[6] Curtius, viii.

[7] Plin. Ep. x. 88

[8] Oros. vi 18.

It was not a Jewish punishment, for the cases mentioned in the Old Testament of "hanging up" criminals or offenders

CHAP. LXIII.

refer only to their dead bodies,[9 b] or were imitations of the heathen custom by some of the kings. For Jews to crucify a Jew, indeed, would have been impossible, as the national sentiment would have revolted from it. The cruelty of heathenism had to be called in by the corrupt and sunken priesthood, before such a death could be inflicted on any member of the nation, far less on one declared by the Procurator himself to be innocent.[10] It was the punishment inflicted by heathenism, which knew no compassion or reverence for man as man,—on the worst criminals, on highway robbers, rebels, and slaves, or on provincials who, in the eyes of Rome, were only slaves, if they fell into crime.

[9] Ewald's Alt. 220, 420.

[10] Ewald, Gesch v. 573.

The cross used at Calvary consisted of a strong post, which was carried beforehand to the place of execution, and of two cross pieces, borne to the spot by the victim, and afterwards nailed to the uprights so that they slanted forward, and let the sufferer lean on his stretched out hands, and thus relieve the pressure of his body downwards.[11] A stout rough wooden pin, in the middle of the upright post, supplied a seat of fitting agony, for the weight of the body would otherwise have torn it from the cross.

[11] Ewald, Gesch. v. 572. Keim, iii. 397. Paulus, iii. 235. De Wette's Archäologie, 166. Winer, R.W.B., *Art.* "Kreuzigung." Sepp, vi. 298.

While everything was being prepared, Jesus was exposed in the guard-room, once more, to the insults of the soldiery. At last, however, all was ready, and the scarlet cloak was now removed, and His own linen abba replaced. It was the custom, as I have said, for offenders themselves to carry the transverse pieces of their cross, and these, therefore, were now laid on the shoulders of Jesus, faint as He was with mental and bodily distress. A detachment of the cohort which had been massed in the court of the palace, in case of disturbance, was told off under a centurion to guard the procession to the place of death, the officer being responsible for the due execution of the sentence. Jesus was not, however, to die alone. Two more prisoners were brought out to suffer with Him; men convicted not of mere insurrection, but of robbery; the special trouble of the land in these evil times, even till Jerusalem perished. Pilate could hardly have intended to degrade Jesus in the eyes of the Jews by associating Him with enemies of society, but the want of

thought, with which he formed such a group of victims, simply to empty his prison, and get through the annual Easter executions at once, shows how superficial an impression had been made on his light nature by all that had passed. His seriousness had been written in water; heartlessness and utter want of moral earnestness were his prevailing mood.

And now the sad procession began. It was about ten in the forenoon, for at least an hour had been spent in getting ready. The soldiers stepped into their ranks, and the prisoners were set, under guard, in their places; each carrying, hung from his neck, a whitened board, proclaiming in large black letters the offences for which he was about to die; unless, indeed, as in some cases, a soldier bore it before them. Each, also, bore the cross beams of his cross, fastened together like the letter V, with his arms bound to the projecting ends.

It is vain to attempt to follow the route, for the whole surface of Jerusalem has changed since then. Roman London is only reached at a depth of sixteen or seventeen feet, though the history of our island is comparatively peaceful; but Jerusalem has stood siege after siege till the streets of Christ's day are buried below the ruins of successive cities. All we know is that the place of execution was outside the walls, to the north-west, at the side of a leading road,[12] to let the spectacle be seen by the crowds passing and repassing.[c] From the palace of Herod, the sad procession must have passed out under the shadow of the great castles of Hippicus, Phasaelus, and Mariamne; through the Hebron or Jaffa gate, or the gate Gennath. As it moved slowly on, an official proclaimed aloud the names of the prisoners, and the offences for which they were about to die.[13] Four soldiers walked beside each, as the special guard and executioners, the rest of the detachment preceding and following.

As it moved through the narrow streets, a great crowd accompanied it. The Temple had special claims on the citizens in the Passover week, and, besides, it would soon be Sabbath, and they were busy with their worldly affairs, and loath to afford the time; yet many, both friends and

[12] Num. 15. 31. 1 Kings 21. 13. Acts 7. 58. Matt. 27. 39. Mark 15. 29. Cic. Verr. v. 66. Hor. Heb. Lightfoot, ii. 364. Sepp, vi. 303.

[13] Sepp, vi. 303.

enemies, pressed after the soldiers. The women especially, less easily diverted from sorrow and pity, either by religious rites or every-day duties, thronged to see One led out to die of whom they had heard so much. In the East, men and women, even man and wife, never appear in public together, and hence all were free to show their feelings independently. The Galilæans in the city had been taken by surprise, and had had no time to gather at the trial and show sympathy with their countryman, whom so many of them reckoned as a prophet. Only fanatical Jerusalem, to which the cry of the priests was law, and to whom Jesus, as a supposed enemy of the Temple,—the idol at once of their bigotry and their pocket,—was doubly hateful, had learned of the arrest in the early morning, and had gathered to yell down Pilate's proposals of release.

Two incidents only are recorded of the march to the place of execution. The beams laid on Jesus soon proved too heavy, in the hilly streets, for His exhausted strength, and His slow advance with them so delayed the procession that the guard grew impatient, and having seized a passer-by coming from the country, compelled him to bear them. The involuntary cross-bearer was a foreign Jew, called Simon, from Cyrene, in North Africa; now part of Tunis, then part of the province of Libya. Ptolemæus Lagi[14] had carried off a hundred thousand Jews from Palestine, and settled them in these parts of North Africa, and in three hundred years they had increased so greatly in numbers, that a special synagogue was erected in Jerusalem[15] for the pilgrims they yielded to the great feasts. Simon's appearance marked him as a foreigner, for, in the East, all nationalities have their distinctive dress; and, as a stranger, the infamy of being made to carry a cross would be less likely to cause a stir. It may be that he showed sympathy with Jesus, but, in any case, his service to Him appears to have resulted in his conversion, with all his family; for it is easy to believe the tradition that the "Rufus and his mother," of whom St. Paul, a quarter of a century later, speaks so tenderly, were his wife and one of the two sons, Alexander and Rufus, mentioned by St. Mark[16] as known to his readers.

[14] B.C. 323—285.

[15] Acts 6. 9.

[16] Mark 15. 21 Rom. 16. 13.

From the moment of His declaring Himself the Messiah, and being condemned to die for doing so, Jesus had had nothing more to say to His judges.[17] No cry of pain; no murmur of impatience escaped Him. He had realized to the full all that the victorious completion of His work, through self-sacrifice, demanded, and bore indignities and agonies with unbroken submission. He was dying to free mankind from the bondage of the letter; to break, for ever, the chains of Rabbinism and priestly caste, from the human soul; to inaugurate the reign of spiritual religion; and, above all, to atone for man's sin, and then enter into His glory with the Father. The joy set before Him strengthened Him, in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, to endure the cross, and despise the shame.[18]

[17] Luke 23. 27–32. Matt. 27. 31–34. Mark 15. 20–23. John 19. 16–17.

[18] Heb. 12. 2.

But His lips, shut for hours, opened once more on the way to His death. The road was lined with spectators, many of whom did not attempt to conceal their sympathy; and a great crowd followed, both of men and women—the latter filling the air with loud lamentations and wailings. Touched with their grief, so strangely sweet after such a long bitterness of mockery and clamorous hatred, the Innocent One stopped on His way, and turning to them, bade them lament, not for Him, but for themselves.

"Daughters of Jerusalem," said He, "weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves." His death was the fulfilment of the counsels of God, and His apparent overthrow was His real and eternal victory. They might have wept for Him, had he shrunk from completing the work given Him to do, and failed to perfect the great plan of human salvation. "But weep for yourselves and for your children. The fate of Jerusalem which I love so well, is sealed, and will be sad indeed compared with my momentary pains. For if your enemies do these things to Me, a green fruit-bearing tree that deserves to live and be cherished—Me, pronounced guiltless even by the judge himself—what will they do with the dry and worthless tree of the nation, guilty before God and man? Israel is a dry, leafless trunk that will bear no more fruit, but is doomed to the burning. What will be its fate, if Mine, who am green and fresh in innocence, be what it

CHAP. LXIII.

is! Yet the green, cut down, will sprout again, but the dry will perish for evermore! In that day the curse of ages of sin and hypocrisy will overwhelm your city and Temple, with its watchers and shepherds."

He had always loved children, and had often pressed them to His heart and carried them in His arms, but the vision of the awful future now rising before Him was darkened by this very tenderness. To bear children was the glory of every Jewish wife; but in after years, He told them, they would call her blessed who had never borne. "Your nation has not known the day of its visitation: it has pushed back my hand when I offered it life here and hereafter; it has killed its prophets and stoned them that were sent to it from God; and now the things of its peace are hid from its eyes. Instead of life let it wish a grave, ere its despairing cry rises that the mountains should fall on it, and the hills cover it[19] from the avenging wrath of God." Words of tender human love, welling up from the depths of a sacred pity, even under the shadow of the cross!

[19] Schenkel. 304.

Matt. 27. 35—38. Mark 15. 24—28. Luke 23. 33, 34. 38. John 19. 18—24.

The spot on which the crosses were to be erected stood near some of the gardens of the suburbs, and was known by the Aramaic name, Golgotha, of which Cranion—a skull—given as the name by St. Luke, writing for Gentiles, is the Greek translation, and Calvaria, Calvary, the Latin. From a fancied allusion to the shape of a skull, tradition has handed it down as a hill; but all the four Gospels call it simply a place, as if it had its name only from its bare smoothness and slight convexity, as we speak of the *brow* of a hill from its rounded slope. It may have been the usual place of execution, but there is nothing in the name to lead to the belief, for, in that case, it would have been spoken of as a place of *skulls;* had they been permitted to lie unburied in Judea, which was impossible.

The cross pieces were nailed in their places on the upright posts, sometimes before, sometimes after, the posts themselves had been set up. Jesus and His fellow-sufferers, in either case, were now stripped once more, as they had been before they were scourged—a linen cloth at most being left round their loins.[d] The centre cross was set

apart for our Lord, and He was laid on it either as it lay on the ground, or lifted and tied to it as it stood upright, His arms stretched along the two cross beams, and His body resting on the projecting pin of rough wood, misnamed a seat. The most dreadful part then followed; for, though even the Egyptians only tied the victims to the cross, the Romans and Carthaginians added to the torture, by driving a huge nail through the palm of each hand into the wood. The legs were next bent up till the soles of the feet lay flat on the upright beam, and then they, too, were fastened, either, separately, by two great iron nails, or over each other, by one.

A single touch of humanity was permitted during these preparations—the offer of a draught of the common sour wine drunk by the soldiers, mingled with some stupefying bitter drug—usually myrrh. The ladies of Jerusalem made it, indeed, their special task to provide it for all condemned persons.[20] But Jesus would take nothing to cloud His faculties, even though it might mitigate His pain. The cross was now lifted up and planted in the ground, with a rough shock of undescribable agony. It was perhaps then that the first words uttered from it rose from His lips—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,"—words breathing love, patience, submission, gentleness, and goodwill, not only towards the soldiers, who were only the blind servants of power, but even to Pilate, and Caiaphas, Hannas, and Jerusalem!

[20] Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ii. 366.

Racked by the extremest pain, and covered with every shame which men were wont to heap on the greatest criminals; forsaken and denied by His disciples; no sigh escaped His lips, no cry of agony, no bitter or faltering word; only a prayer for the forgiveness of His enemies. They had acted in blindness, under the impulse of religious and political fanaticism, for, to use St. Paul's words, had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. They thought, without doubt, that they were doing a service well-pleasing to God in putting Him to death. It stood written in the books of Moses,[21] "Cursed be he who does not fulfil the words of the law to do them," and they

[21] Deut. 27. 26. De Wette's and Ernesti's translation. In Zunz's translation, "Does not hold upright"

CHAP. LXIII.

fancied they were obeying this command in crucifying Him for slighting their additions, which they confounded with the word of God. In spite of all their school learning they were blind to the true meaning of the Scriptures, though this ignorance was not guiltless, for He had sought for three years to rouse them to a better knowledge. But their guilt was in some measure lessened by the influence on their minds of education and the prescriptions of centuries, which had shut their eyes to the light He brought them. His prayer that His heavenly Father would pardon them was only a last utterance of the love of which He had been the embodiment and expression through life, and the fitting illustration of His words that He came to call the sick; not those who had no need of a physician.[22]

The "title" that had been borne before Him, or hung from His neck, was now nailed on the projecting top of the cross, over His head. That all classes might be able to read it, Pilate had it written in the three languages of the country —the Aramaic of the people, the Latin of the Romans, and the Greek of the foreign population. It proclaimed Him THE KING OF THE JEWS, but seems to have run differently in each language, to judge from the variations in the Gospels.[e]

No tribute could have been more fitting, or more prophetic than an inscription which revealed unconsciously the relation of the Cross to all the nationalities of the world. The crucifixion was now completed, and there only remained the weary interval, till death came to deliver the sufferers from their agonies. Meanwhile the troops, with their centurion, kept the ground and guarded the three crosses, for they were answerable with their lives for the due carrying out of the execution.

The four soldiers—a quaternion—specially detailed to carry out the sentence of the procurator, were now free to appropriate, as their perquisites, the clothes of the three victims.[23] The outer garments of Jesus they divided into four shares—tearing the larger, to make the division equal —for they were not worth keeping entire. The inner robe, however, like the robes of the priests,[24] was of one piece woven from the top without any seam or stitching, and

[22] Schenkel, 307. Hanna's Last Day of our Lord's Passion, 176.

[23] Acts 12. 4.

[24] Ant. iii. 7. 4. Lücke, ii. 489. Merz, *Art.* "Kreuzigung," in Herzog, viii. 76

would be destroyed by rending. The dice were ready in their pocket, and one of their brazen helmets would serve to throw them; it would be better to cast lots for this, and let him who won the highest number keep it for himself—and so it was done. No wonder that both Matthew and John, looking back on the scene, were struck by the fact that it had been written, ages before, in the twenty-second Psalm, which the Jews of that day, as well as Christians, rightly believed to refer to the Messiah—"They parted my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots."[25]

[25] Ps. 22. 18.

The inscription on the cross had been Pilate's revenge for the condemnation of Jesus, wrung from him by the priests. To proclaim Him, the villager of Nazareth, as the King of the Jews, marked, at once, what was fit, in his opinion, for them, and flung in their faces a bitter reproach of having betrayed their own nation and countryman, to Rome. The authorities of the Temple were indignant, and yet alarmed, and applied to him to alter it. But he had suffered enough at their hands, and smarting under his defeat and humiliation, dismissed them with the laconic answer, "What I have written I have written."

Meanwhile the fierce heat of a Syrian noon beat down on the cross. The suffering in crucifixion, from which death at last resulted, rose partly from the constrained and fixed position of the body, and of the outstretched arms, which caused acute pain from every twitch or motion of the back, lacerated by the knout, and of the hands and feet, pierced by the nails. These latter were, moreover, driven through parts where many sensitive nerves and sinews come together, and some of these were mutilated; others violently crushed down. Inflammation of the wounds in both hands and feet, speedily set in, and erelong rose also in other places, where the circulation was checked by the tension of the parts. Intolerable thirst, and ever-increasing pain, resulted. The blood, which could no longer reach the extremities, rose to the head, swelled the veins and arteries in it unnaturally, and caused the most agonizing tortures in the brain. As, besides, it could no longer move freely from the lungs, the heart grew more and more oppressed, and all the veins were

CHAP. LXIII.

distended. Had the wounds bled freely, it would have been a great relief, but there was very little lost. The weight of the body itself, resting on the wooden pin of the upright beam; the burning heat of the sun scorching the veins, and the hot wind, which dried up the moisture of the body, made each moment more terrible than that before. The numbness and stiffness of the more distant muscles brought on painful convulsions, and this numbness, slowly extending, sometimes through two or three days, at last reached the vital parts, and released the sufferer by death.[26]

Common pity would have left the victim of such agony to die in peace. But it is reserved to the malignant hatred and passion which spring from perverted religious zeal to ignore compassion. The title over His head was as offensive to the people as to the priests and Rabbis, for it was a virtual ridicule of their impotent aspirations after universal monarchy. Beneath the cross the same mockery indulged itself, as the procurator had thought not beneath the dignity of Rome. The fierce crowd had heard repeatedly that day of Jesus having said, as was asserted, that He could destroy their vast temple, and build it up again in three days. They had heard also a great deal about His miracles, and of His calling Himself the Son of God, but it seemed as if the whole must have been a deception, else why would He let Himself die such a death? There were taunts and bitter gibes, from the mob and the soldiers, and triumphant sneers at His having met the fate He deserved; the very high priests, and Rabbis, and elders, indeed, degraded themselves to the level of the rabble in their unmanly taunts, among their own knots and groups.[27] "Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, show that Thou couldst have done so, by saving Thyself, and coming down from the cross," called out a looker-on, with a contemptuous laugh. "If Thou be the Son of God, as Thou sayest," cried another, "come down from the cross." "He wrought miracles to save others," said a high priest to his fellow, "by the help of Beelzebub, but He cannot save Himself, now His master has forsaken Him." The crowd, catching their spirit, bandied from one to another the scoff, "If He be the Christ, the

[26] Richter in Herzog, xi. 67. Winer, *Art.* "Kreuzigung." Paulus, ii. 238.

[27] Matt. 27. 39—44. Mark 15. 29—32. Luke 23. 35—37, 39—43. John 19. 25—30.

King of Israel, the Chosen of God, let Him descend from the cross, that we may see and believe." A true index to their religious ideas! If they saw Him with their bodily eyes, by a miracle come down from the cross, they would believe! Their religion rested on their five senses.[28] The invisible spiritual power, in which Jesus taught, did His work, and founded His kingdom, had no existence for them. The only authority for their faith was what they could grasp with their hands, or see with their eyes!

[28] Schenkel, 303

Nor was the only railing, and trial of bitter mocking, from the spectators. Affecting indifference to their own sufferings, and perhaps wishing to get a poor favour with the crowd, in their last hours; perhaps angry that Jesus had left both them and Himself to die, when He might have saved them; the two unhappy men crucified with Him, cast the same reproaches in His teeth. But a strange contrast was soon to display itself. One of the two, erelong, awed and won by His bearing under such treatment; perhaps thinking of the daughters of Jerusalem he had seen weeping by the way; or of the words of Jesus in which He spoke of the distant future as open before Him; perhaps struck by the title over the Saviour's head, or by the very taunts which spoke of His having trusted in God, and having claimed to be the Christ, the Chosen, the Son of the Highest; perhaps recollecting some words of His heard in happier days; repented of his bitterness, and turned to his companion, to persuade him, also, to kinder thoughts. "Have you no fear of God," said he, "when you think that you are dying the same death as He whom you are still reproaching? It is no time to mock, when you are so near death. Besides, we are dying justly, for we are receiving the fitting punishment of our deeds; but this man, as the very procurator has said, has done nothing amiss."

Then followed words which showed that his repentance and faith were alike sincere and intelligent. He had been silently watching the meek and patient endurance by his mysterious Fellow-Sufferer, of all that His enemies could do, and had come to the belief that He was, in reality, the Messiah He declared Himself to be. With death near,

CHAP. LXIII. the folly of the earthly dreams of his countrymen—for he must have been a Jew—flashed on his mind. As the Messiah, He who now hung in agony must have a kingdom of which death could not deprive Him, and it must be in the world beyond, since He had only a cross here. He would doubtless enter on it, as even the Rabbis taught, at the resurrection of the dead, and reign over it for all future ages.

"O Lord," said he, therefore, turning as far as he could towards Jesus, as he spoke, "remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

"This day," replied Jesus, "thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

To have confessed his faith when Christ hung on the cross, and was deserted even by His Apostles, won for him the high reward of being the first trophy of the victory that cross achieved. His ideas might be vague and obscure enough; but the broken heart and trustful love which uttered them, made them dear to the Saviour. Angry blasphemies alone had hitherto greeted Him, but now came this prayer, dropping like balm on His wounded spirit! Calmly, and with the bounty of a king—though now nailed to the cross—He showed His answering love by the gift of divine pardon of sin, and the bestowment of a crown in Paradise![f]

The Eleven had never gathered again after the arrest, and had been too much alarmed even to venture, singly, into the crowd which stood outside the cordon of troops round the three crosses. John, alone, had had courage enough to follow his Master to Calvary, and to cheer Him by the proof of fidelity in at least one heart. He had, indeed, foreseen that He would be deserted thus in His hour of need; but He was too near His triumph to notice their absence as otherwise He might. The veil between Him and His eternal glory was, each moment, fading into the upper light, and had He not, even now, won the first trophy of His redeeming love, to bear with Him to heaven?

The last sight we have of John, before the crucifixion, is in the courtyard of the high priest, where his silence and

prudent keeping in the background, saved him from the danger before which Peter had fallen. He had seen Jesus led away to Pilate, and had, apparently, followed Him to the palace, waiting in the angry crowd till the weak time-serving procurator had given Him up to the cross. He may have left as soon as the end was known, to hasten into the city with the sad news, to those anxious to hear; above all, to tell her whose soul the sword was now about to pierce most keenly. Mary, likely, heard her Son's fate from his lips. She had come to Jerusalem to be near Him, but we do not know when; for she was not one of the group of pious Galilæan women who habitually followed Him, though she was with them at this moment. How many were together is not told; but Mary, at least, on hearing John's words, determined, in her love, to go at once to Calvary, and some round her resolved to go with her. Her own sister, who, it may be, was Salome, the mother of John;[29] Mary, the wife of Clōpas; Mary from Magdala, on the banks of Gennesareth, would attend her, and John, faithful as a woman, would not stay behind.

The first sight the Virgin had of her Son was as He hung on the cross, at the roadside, mocked by the crowd and the passers-by, and scowled at by the high priests and dignitaries, who had come out to glut the hatred they bore Him by the sight of His agony. A supernatural darkness—the sign of the sorrow and the wrath of heaven—had fallen on the landscape soon after the nailing to the cross—though it was then high noon; but the spectators had fancied it only a strange incident in the weather. The Sufferer had offered His prayer for His murderers, and had spoken words of comfort to the penitent spirit at His side; when, as His eyes wandered over the crowd, He saw, through the gloom, John, standing by His mother's side. None of His "brothers or sisters" were there, for His resurrection was first to win them to His cause,[30] and Mary, long a widow, was now to be more so still. He knew John's heart, and, indeed, his presence there proclaimed it. The sight of His mother in tears; true even in death; in spite of danger, or of her broken heart, or of the reproaches rising on every side;[31] the remembrance

[29] Wieseler, Stud. u. Krit. 1840. Lücke, ii. 491 Ewald's Gesch. v. 579 239.

[30] Ewald, v. 579

[31] Rosenmüller's Scholia in New Test. ii. 637.

CHAP. LXIII.

of Nazareth; the thought of the sorrows that so often, in these last years, had pierced her soul, and of the supreme grief that had now overwhelmed her; the recognition of the true faith in Him, shining out in these last hours, as the child, borne by miracle to be a Saviour, the holy Son of God; and the thought that His earthly relations to her were closed for ever, filled His heart with tender emotions.

Turning His face, now veiled with many sorrows, to her and John, He provided for the one, and honoured the fidelity of the other. A few words gave Mary a home and another son, and rewarded the friend of His soul by the charge to take the place towards Mary He Himself was leaving. "Woman," said He, in tones of infinite tenderness, "behold, in him at thy side thou hast thy Son given back to thee." Then, looking at John, he added, "To thee I trust my mother; let her be thy mother for my sake."

Need we wonder that the beloved disciple, writing his Gospel in old age, felt a sweet reward in recalling an incident so unspeakably touching? Mary, henceforth, had a home, for John took her to his own. His love to her divine Son made him dearer to her than the circle of Nazareth, however related. In Mary, he saw a second mother; in John, the widowed one saw a son.[32] Nor was the new nearness to Jesus the only reward to John from the cross. His Master had shown, by His thoughts for others rather than Himself, in this time of His greatest need, that He was still what He had always been. Looking up to Him, John saw the light of higher than earthly victory on His pale features, and felt his faith confirmed for ever.

[32] Paulus, ii. 244.

It was now three o'clock, and Jesus had hung on the cross about three hours. Darkness[g] still lay like a pall over the landscape, as if nature, less insensible than man, refused to look on such a spectacle, or would prefigure the sadness one day to be spread over all nations for the sin that had caused so awful a sacrifice. What had been passing in His spirit no one can know. As a man He had a nature, in all things, except its sinlessness, like that of the race at large. But He was also the divine Son of God, for a time in the form of a servant, and now, of His own free love to

man, dying as a ransom for sin. We accept the transcendent mystery but we cannot hope to explain it. The cross was but the culmination of a long martyrdom. His soul had often been sore troubled; His sighs had been marked even by His disciples. To be dying for the sake of men, and yet to be treated as their foe; to be misconceived and misrepresented; to have His heart full of infinite love, and hear, even now, only execrations, brought back, for a moment, the mental agony of Gethsemane. It was the "power of darkness;" the final struggle with the prince of this world. To the unendurable torture of the body there was added the unspeakable spiritual pain of apparently utter rejection by man, whom He loved with a love so divine! His Father was with Him in the midst of the darkness as much as in the Transfiguration at Cæsarea Philippi, but the gathering clouds and gloom of these last awful hours made it seem, for an instant, as if HIS face were hidden. The shadows of death passed for a moment in blackness and horror over His spirit, and His mental anguish relieved itself by a great cry of distress. The language we have heard from our mother's lips and have spoken in childhood, may be laid aside in after years for another, to meet the requirements of life; and Jesus, doubtless, in these last years, had often had to use the Greek of city communities, instead of His own simple Galilæan. But, now, the sounds of infancy, always nearest the heart, and sure to come to the lips in our deepest emotion, returned in His anguish, and in words which He had learned at His mother's knee, His heart uttered its last wail—

"Eloï! Eloï! lama sabachthani?"[h]

"My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?"

The first words sounded like the name of the great prophet Elijah, the expected herald of the Messiah, and were taken, by some in the crowd, for a cry that he should come to save Him. Meanwhile, one near, more pitiful than the rest; caring little for the words, saw the agony of which they were the expression, and ran and filled a sponge with the sour wine-and-water of the soldiers, and having fixed it on the short stem of a hyssop-plant, growing near, put it to His

CHAP. LXIII.

lips; for the cross was quite low, the feet of Jesus reaching nearly to the ground.

A moment more, and all was over. The cloud had passed as suddenly as it rose. Far and wide, over the vanquished throngs of His enemies, with a loud voice, as if uttering His shout of eternal victory before entering into His glory, He cried,

"IT IS FINISHED!"

Then, more gently, came the words:—

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

A moment more, and there rose a great cry, as of mortal agony: the head fell. He was dead.

The great work of salvation was now, at last, completed; prophecy fulfilled; the Ancient Covenant at an end, the New inaugurated. Judaism was for ever obsolete, and the Holy of Holies had ceased to be the peculiar presence-chamber of Jehovah among men. Nor was a sign wanting that it was so, for the great veil of purple and gold—sixty feet long and thirty broad—before the inner sanctuary of the Temple, suddenly rent itself in two, from the top to the bottom, at the moment of Christ's death: as if He who had hitherto dwelt there had gone forth to lead up His Eternal Son to His own right hand. And, indeed, not only the yielding veil of the Temple, but the very rocks, round Calvary, as St. Matthew tells us,[33] "were rent, and the earth quaked, the graves were opened, and many of the saints sleeping in them rose from the dead, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many."

[33] Matt. 27. 51—56. Mark 15. 38—41. Luke 23. 45, 47—49.

One incident is recorded of this moment, by three of the Evangelists. The centurion in charge of the troops had halted, as he passed the cross, when Jesus uttered His loud death-cry. He was within a few yards of Him, and must have involuntarily fixed his gaze on Him at such a sound. He saw the change pass over His features; the light of life leaving them, and the head suddenly sink. As it did so, the earthquake shook the ground, and made the three crosses tremble. But the tremor of the earth affected the Roman less than the piercing cry and sudden death.[34] He had likely attended many crucifixions, but had never seen

[34] Matt. 27. 54. Mark 15. 39. Luke 23. 47.

or heard of a man dying within three hours, on a cross. He had never heard a crucified man, strong to the last, utter a shriek that showed, as that of Jesus did, the full vigour of the vital organs to the last. He felt that there was something mysterious in it, and joining with it all he had seen and heard of the Sufferer, he broke involuntarily into the words, "Assuredly this man was righteous; truly this was God's Son." The one expression was, perhaps, equivalent on his lips to the other, but both showed that even heathen spectators were profoundly affected by the spectacle they had witnessed.

Nor was the effect on the spectators less marked. The darkness, the earthquake, and the rending rocks, had filled them with alarm. They had been noisy and ribald enough, for a time, but when all was over, amidst such strange portents of nature, they were glad to hasten home in silence, with the demonstrations of awe peculiar to Eastern populations—smiting their breasts as they went. The incidents of Calvary had prepared the way for the triumph of Pentecost, as perhaps the rending of the veil had been the first step towards the change of feeling in the great company of priests[35] who soon after professed themselves Christians.

[35] Acts 6: 7;

The Jewish law, as I have said, knew nothing of crucifixion, but it had been not uncommon to hang up the body of a criminal after death. It was not permitted, however, that it should be exposed after sunset; burial the same day was enacted, "that the land should not be defiled."[36] The Romans, on the contrary, left the bodies on the cross till they were wasted away, or devoured by the dogs, the jackals, or the ravens—as they fell limb from limb. "To feed the crows on the cross" was a familiar expression.[37] It was necessary, therefore, if the Jewish law were to be honoured, that the permission of Pilate should be given for putting the crucified ones to death, if they had not already died, and for taking down and burying their bodies, almost at once. Next day was the great Paschal Sabbath, and only an hour or two remained before it commenced. Three corpses seen on the cross, so near the Temple and the Holy City, on a day so sacred, would make great commotion, as polluting

[36] Deut. 21. 23. John 19. 31–42.

[37] Horat. Ep. xvi. 48.

CHAP. LXIII.

the whole place. Besides, the feelings of the people might turn, with unknown results.

A deputation of the Temple authorities, therefore, waited on Pilate, to get his sanction for putting any of the three to death, who might yet be alive. The common way to do so was in keeping with Roman brutality.[38] The legs of the unfortunates were broken by blows of clubs, and this Pilate authorized to be done, that the shock might kill them at once. The two thieves were found still living, and the horrible order was forthwith executed on them, but Jesus was dead already, and they left Him untouched. One soldier, however,—resolved that there should be no doubt,—plunged his spear into the Saviour's side, making a gash so wide, that Jesus could afterwards ask Thomas to put his hand into it, and so deep, that blood and water poured out in such a quantity as attracted the notice of John, who was still standing close by.

[8] See list of historical cases in Sepp, vii. 441.

That any one should die so soon on the cross, especially one, like Jesus, in the prime of life, and unweakened by previous ill-health, and in such vigour to the last as to utter such a shriek as that with which He expired, appeared even to Christian antiquity, to imply some supernatural cause.[39] But the mingled flow of blood and water seems to point unmistakably to another explanation. The immediate cause of death appears, beyond question, to have been the rupture of His heart, brought about by mental agony. Excess of joy or grief is known to induce the bursting of some division of the heart, and the consequent flow of blood into the pericardium, or bag, filled with colourless serum, like water, in which the heart is suspended. In ordinary cases, only examination after death discovers the fact, but in that of our Lord, the same end was answered by the thrust of the soldier's spear. In a death from heart-rupture "the hand is suddenly carried to the front of the chest, and a piercing shriek uttered."[i] The hands of Jesus were nailed to the cross, but the appalling shriek is recorded.

[9] See quotations in Keim, iii 436.

Jesus died, literally, of a broken heart!

The heat of the climate in the East has led to the custom of burial following almost immediately after death, but there

were special reasons for that of Jesus being hurried. It was the eve of the great Passover Sabbath, and no corpse could be left unburied to defile the ceremonial purity of the Holy City, on that day. It was necessary, therefore, that our Lord be buried without a moment's delay, for sunset, when the Sabbath began, was rapidly approaching.

Bodies of Jewish criminals seem to have been buried with ignominy, in the valley of Hinnom; known, from this reason, as the Valley of Corpses[40]—amidst the unclean dust-heaps of the city, and the ashes of the burned offal of the Temple sacrifices. They could not be laid in the graves of their fathers—the common burial-place of the community—for the guilty could not be buried with the just—but were huddled out of sight—the beheaded, or hanged, in one spot; the stoned, and burned, in another.[41] But such an indignity was not to befall the sacred form of the Saviour.

Among the spectators of the crucifixion there had been one, if not two, whose position might have enabled them to be of service to Jesus in His hour of need, before the high priestly court, had they had the moral courage to avow their convictions. Joseph, a member of the ruling class, known by the name of his birthplace—Arimathea, or Ramathaim Zophim,[42] where Samuel the prophet was born—among the "fruitful hills" of Ephraim—had long been a secret disciple; and so, also, had Nicodemus, another member of the theocratic oligarchy. Afraid of the overwhelming opposition they must encounter by supporting Christ, they had timidly kept in the background during His trial, though neither had voted for the condemnation. Joseph, indeed, if not both, had even braved public opinion, and the wrath of their fellow-counsellors, by following Jesus to Calvary. Now that He was dead, breaking through all weak reserve and caution at last, he went into the city,[43] and waited on the procurator, in his palace, to ask as a favour, that the body of Jesus might be put at his disposal. He would fain honour His lifeless form, if only to show his regret and shame for unworthy half-heartedness while He still lived. The meekness and majestic silence under all reproaches and indignities; the veiled sky, the

[40] Jer. 31. 40. See Naegelsbach, d. Proph Jeremiah, 226.

[41] Sanhed. c. 6. 5.

[42] 1 Sam. 1. 1, 19. Furrer, Bibel Lex., *Art.* "Rama," Fürst and Gesenius, Lex.

Matt. 27. 57—66. Mark 15. 42—47. Luke 23. 50—56. John 19. 38—42.

[43] εἰσῆλθε. Mark 15. 43

CHAP. LXIII.

trembling earth; the prayer of the Sufferer for His murderers; His wail of mental agony, as if forsaken; and then the great shriek, and sudden death—had awed his soul, and lifted him far above fear of man. He had been waiting for the Kingdom of God before, but would openly identify himself with its Founder now.

Pilate was astonished, alike, that a Jew in Joseph's position should make such a request, and that Jesus should already be dead. It was not allowed to remove a body from the cross without formal permission from the procurator. The Eleven, with one exception, had left their Master alone amidst His enemies in His last awful hours, and even the women who had watched the cross, did not venture to ask the stony-hearted governor to let them pay the last tribute of love to the dead. It was no light matter Joseph had undertaken; for to take part in a burial, at any time, would defile him for seven days, and make everything unclean which he touched;[44] and to do so now involved his seclusion through the whole Passover week—with all its holy observances and rejoicings. But, conscience-stricken for the past, he had risen superior, alike to prudent inaction or ceremonial prejudice, and would render his Master a tribute and service especially sacred in the eyes of a Jew. It was one of the most loved remembrances of the hero Tobit, in the old times of the first exile,[45] that he had buried any Jew whom he found cast out dead, round Nineveh, and Josephus could add no darker horror, a generation later, to the picture of the fall of Jerusalem, than by telling that the Zealots would not bury those slain in the city or who fell down on the roads.[46] Joseph would not suffer Jesus to want the last offices, with all the indignity the neglect would imply.

Sending for the officer who had charge of the execution, and finding that Jesus was really dead, Pilate granted Joseph's strange request. A brave deed had had its success. The humour of the procurator could not be counted on, and the rage of Joseph's own party was certain. In later days, a servant, Porphyrius, who ventured to ask from the procurator Firmilian, the body of his martyred master, the

[44] Num. 19. 17. Hagg. 2. 13. See Winer, Reinigkeit.

[45] Tobit. 1. 17, 19.

[46] Bell Jud. iv. 6. 3.

presbyter Pamphilus, for burial, was himself seized and put to death. The apocryphal Acts of Pilate[47] describe Joseph as beseeching the favour with tears and entreaties, and they, thus, rightly mark the gravity of his act, but it is not unlikely that a meaner influence came to his help, for Philo tells us that Pilate's special characteristic was his openness to a bribe.[48] Two or three thousand denarii from the wealthy supplicant, would weigh more than his supplications, in securing his wish.[49]

A written order, or a verbal command to the centurion, put the body at Joseph's disposal.

With the help of servants, and, it may be, of some soldiers, the cross was quickly cut down or lifted from its socket, and laid on the ground, the cords round the limbs untied, and the nails drawn from the hands and feet. An open bier sufficed to carry away the body to its destined resting-place.

Among the Jews the hopes of the future were closely connected with the careful preservation of the body after death. Like the Egyptians, they attached supreme importance to the inviolability of the tomb either by time or violence, and, no less, to the checking of natural decay, by embalming. To perpetuate their existence on earth, at least in the withered mockery of the grave, and to lie in the Holy Land, in the midst of their fathers, had, at all times, been the most sacred wish of the Jews. In the days of Jesus, however, an additional motive for burial in Palestine, and a careful preservation of the body, was found in the belief of the Resurrection, which was to take place first in Judea, commencing in the valley under the east of the Temple. Even now an Israelite always seeks to have some of the soil of the Holy Land laid in his grave, that the spot where he rests may be counted part of the sacred ground; if, indeed, his body has not, before the Judgment, made its way through land and sea, to the home of his fathers. The same feeling was all-powerful in the days of our Lord, for in the great sieges of Jerusalem, many Jewish fugitives came back to the city, in spite of the horrors they had already striven to escape—that they might count on at least the last of all blessings, a burial in its holy bounds.[50]

[47] Acta Pil. c. 11 b.

[48] Phil. Leg. 1033.

[49] Instances of bribery of Roman governors to obtain the bodies of the dead. Sepp, vi. 450.

[50] Jos. Bell. Jud. iv. 6. 3.

The neighbourhood of Jerusalem, like all other parts of Palestine, has, thus, since the earliest times, abounded in tombs hewn out in the limestone rock. Princes, rich men, every one who could by any means secure it, desired, above all things, to prepare for themselves and their families an "everlasting house,"[k] and such a tomb, never yet used, had been hewn out in the hill-side for himself, by Joseph, in a garden not far from Calvary.

To this the body of Jesus was now taken. Nicodemus had come with some of his servants, and he and they, with Joseph and his attendants, and Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of James the Less, and of Joses; the wife of Clōpas, and perhaps, some others of the true-hearted women from Galilee, were the only followers of His bier.

Arrived at the grave, the sacred burden was laid down for a time, till the needed preparations were made for placing it in the tomb. The whole body, stained as it was with blood, was tenderly washed, and then wrapped in broad bands of white linen, within which were thickly strewn powdered myrrh and aloes, which had been provided by Nicodemus for the imperfect embalmment practised by the Jews. The ends of the bandages were apparently secured on the inner side with gum, as in the case of the Egyptian dead. A white cloth was finally laid over the face, after a last kiss, the pledge of undying love. The corpse was then laid in a niche in the rock, and since there was no stone door, as in some tombs, a great stone, prepared for the purpose, was rolled against the entrance, to protect the body from the designs of enemies, or the attacks of wild beasts. It was only a hurried burial, for the last rays of the sun were shining on the garden as the stone was set up against the entrance to the grave.

Even then, however, there were some hearts that could not leave the spot. Though He no longer spoke to them, and they no longer saw Him, some of the Galilæan faithful ones still felt that He was theirs, and sat down as mourners, on the earth, before the door of the tomb. In the evening stillness and gathering twilight they still seemed to hear His voice and see His form, and so they lingered on, as near

as might be, into the Sabbath eve, and lamented Him whom they had lost. 

Meanwhile, the fears of the chief priests and their party had already awaked. A meeting had been held immediately after the crucifixion, and the success of the scheme to crush Jesus had, doubtless, been the subject of hearty mutual congratulations. But they dreaded that all was not over. It was remembered by one or more that "the deceiver" had spoken darkly of rising from the dead on the third day, and His disciples, acting on this hint, might steal the body, and spread abroad the assertion that He had actually risen, misleading the people more than ever, by claiming for him divine honours. It was hence necessary that the grave should be watched for three days. A deputation was, therefore, appointed to wait on Pilate, representing their apprehensions. Tired of them, and hating them, the governor was in no humour to argue. "Ye have a guard," said he, with military bluntness. "Go, make it as sure as ye can." This they did. Passing a strong cord across the stone, and securing its ends by clay, they sealed it, after noting that the soldiers were duly stationed so as to make approach without their knowledge impossible.

And thus the Redeemer was left—pale, but victorious—to sleep through the Sabbath.

# CHAPTER LXIV.

## THE RESURRECTION AND THE FORTY DAYS.

CHAP. LXIV.

THE religion of the Letter had carried out to the bitter end its conflict with the religion of the Spirit. Incapable of reform: identifying its dead rites with the essence of truth; it had crucified the Teacher who had dared to say that they had served their day, and lost their worth. Ritualism had reached its natural culmination in claiming to be the whole of religion, and had slain The Truth itself, when He witnessed against it.

The benumbed and moribund Past had striven to perpetuate itself, by attempting to destroy the Kingdom of the Future in its cradle. How utterly it failed, eighteen centuries have told us.

It was the old story: the light had come into the darkness, and the darkness would not have it; accustomed to the one, it was only dazzled and blinded by the other. Evil had had its apparent triumph. As far as the will and hand of man could effect it, He, who, alike as He was man, and as also the Messiah of Israel, knew no spot or blemish of sin, had been crushed as an evil-doer.[1] The one holy being of our race, having revealed Himself as the true Christ, expected for ages; the Hope of Israel; the highest and perfect expression, the true spirit and aim of the ancient economy; and even of all other religions, so far as they had divine elements in them; had been rejected and dishonoured to the uttermost by the rulers of the People of God, and by the great bulk of the nation. He who had desired to secure the salvation of Israel, and through it, of humanity, and had shown how, alone, that salvation could be attained, had been branded by the highest authorities, both of Judaism

[1] Ewald, v. 587

and heathenism, as a deceiver of the people. The blindness of the one, and the indifference of the other, had united in attempting to crush Him whose only weapons in the assault of evil had been the highest wisdom, the divinest love, and unconquerable meekness. But their triumph was only a momentary and permitted eclipse of the Light of the World, destined, presently, to reappear, in unveiled, and, henceforth, unsetting glory.

"Nothing," says even so keen a critic as Heinrich Ewald,[2] "stands more historically certain than that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared again to His followers, or than that their seeing Him thus, again, was the beginning of a higher faith, and of all their Christian work in the world. It is equally certain that they thus saw Him, not as a common man, or as a shade or ghost risen from the grave; but as the one Only Son of God—already more than man at once in nature and power; and that all who thus beheld Him, recognized at once and instinctively His unique divine dignity, and firmly believed in it thenceforth. The Twelve and others had, indeed, learned to look on Him, even in life, as the True Messianic King and the Son of God, but from the moment of His reappearing, they recognized more clearly and fully the divine side of His nature, and saw in Him the conqueror of death. Yet the two pictures of Him thus fixed in their minds were in their essence identical. That former familiar appearance of the earthly Christ, and this higher vision of Him, with its depth of emotion and ecstatic joy, were so inter-related that, even in the first days or weeks after His death, they could never have seen in Him the Heavenly Messiah, if they had not first known Him so well as the earthly."

[2] Geschichte, vi. 75. See also Dr. Arnold's Sermon on the Resurrection.

Mary of Magdala, and the wife of Clōpas, herself another Mary—for Mary, from the Hebrew Miriam, was a favourite name ever since the days of the sister of Moses,—had sat on the ground at the door of the garden-tomb in which the Beloved One lay, till late on the evening on Friday. The trumpet announcing the beginning of the great Passover Sabbath had startled them only for a moment, and exhausted nature had, perhaps, first compelled them to leave.

The next day rose calm and bright on the budding and blossoming landscape, for it was Nisan—the month of flowering—and nature was in the secret to be revealed on the morrow—and might well, for joy, put on her fairest. The courts of the Temple were filled from morning to evening, with zealous worshippers: the barefooted, white-robed, and turbaned priests were busy offering the blood of bulls and of goats[3] for the sins of Israel, unconscious that the blood of a greater sacrifice had been shed, of which that which they offered was only the rude, and well-nigh revolting, symbol. Yet it must have been with strange feelings they went through the services of the day. The trumpets and voices of the Levites were loud and clear as ever: the high priest, fresh from Golgotha, not less gorgeous in his splendid robes: —the crowd of priests not less pressed with official toil: the throngs, filling the courts below, not less numerous or devout. But an omen, portentous beyond all their history recorded, had been seen by Levite and priest alike—for, was not the Holy of Holies, hitherto veiled in awful darkness, and entered only once in the year, for a few moments, by the high priest, laid visibly open before all in the court of the priests: in fact, before all in the vast Temple area, for the Holy of Holies stood high above the rest of the sanctuary? The huge, heavy veil of Babylonian tapestry of fine flax, gorgeous in its hyacinth and scarlet and purple,[4] had been mysteriously rent from top to bottom, at the moment when the "enemy of the Temple" expired on Calvary, and the awful presence-chamber of Jehovah had been exposed to every eye, like ground no longer sacred.

[3] Heb. 10. 4.

[4] Bell. Jud. v 5. 4.

The disciples of Jesus, and even the Eleven, had been overwhelmed by the events of the day. Having no clear idea of their Master's meaning, and thinking little on words painful at best, His repeated warnings that He must be put to death, but would rise again from the dead on the third day, had made no lasting impression on their minds. The catastrophe had been so sudden and complete, that, for the time, they were confounded and paralyzed.

It is the glory of woman that she most seldom forsakes those she loves, even when things are darkest. The two

Marys had left the grave only when the deep night compelled them, but, even then, they still had its Dear One in their hearts. The Sabbath, which had begun just as the stone was rolled to the entrance, kept them from doing anything for Him for twenty-four hours, but it was no sooner over, on Saturday at sunset,[5] than, with Salome and Joanna, and some other women, they arranged to take additional spices at the earliest dawn to complete the embalming of the body begun by Nicodemus, but left unfinished through the approach of the Sabbath. Mary, mother of Jesus, was too sorely stricken in heart to join them.

[5] Greswell's Harm. Evang 393.

Meanwhile, the Roman sentries were pacing to and fro on their beat, before the sepulchre: their fire lighted, for the spring night was chilly, and besides, the light prevented any one approaching. The true-hearted women had resolved to reach the grave by sunrise, which would take place about a quarter before six in the morning,[6] and slept outside the city gates, which would not open till daybreak at the earliest. The grey dawn had hardly shown itself, when they were afoot on their errand, to perform the last offices of love. As they went, however, a difficulty rose of which they had not thought before. Who would roll away the stone for them, from the door of the sepulchre? They had heard nothing of its having been sealed during the Sabbath, or of the guard being mounted in the garden, else they might have been altogether discouraged. But they had, doubtless, told some of the Eleven where the grave lay, and might hope that one, at least, would be there to help them.

[6] Greswell's Harm. Evang. 393.

A greater than an Apostle had already, however, been at the tomb. For St. Matthew tells us, "an angel of the Lord had descended from heaven, his countenance shining like lightning, and his raiment white as snow," "and," striking terror even into the Roman guard, "had rolled back the stone from the door." As it opened the Crucified One had come forth, unseen by the dazzled soldiers, and had presently vanished.

They had scarcely left the spot, when the women arrived. The earth had been trembling strangely, but they had kept on their way. How great must have been their astonish-

ment, however, when they found the stone rolled away, and the grave open. There was no longer a guard, for the soldiers had fled in terror at the angelic vision. Mary of Magdala had entered the garden first, and had found things thus, and having run back to the others, hastened into the city to tell Peter and John. Determined to solve the mystery, if possible, her companions came, together, to the sepulchre, and, bending down, entered its inner chamber. But it was only to be appalled by the sight of an angel, in white, sitting in it; as if waiting to bear the glad news to them, of what had taken place. Presently, a second radiant form stood before them, as they bowed down their faces to the earth, in terror. But words now fell on their ears which brought back joy to their hearts. "Fear not, for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, for He is risen. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go quickly, tell His disciples, and Peter, that He is risen from the dead. Remember the words that He said to you, while He was yet in Galilee—that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And tell them 'He goeth before you into Galilee'—there you will see Him, as He said unto you. So, I have told you."

Mary of Magdala had hurried back to Jerusalem with eager steps, to tell Peter and John, who seem to have lived together at this time, the strange fact of the grave being empty. The Virgin Mother, John's honoured guest, now, doubtless, heard the amazing news, and joined the other Mary in urging the two Apostles to go instantly to the tomb; though their own hearts had at once instinctively impelled both, forthwith, to do so. Peter and John, therefore, were on the way to the garden at once; their eager haste hurrying them to the utmost speed. John, however, younger than Peter, outran him, yet contented himself, on reaching the tomb, with stooping down, and gazing into its empty space. The body, assuredly, was gone, but there was no trace of violence, for the linen bandages lay carefully unrolled, in the empty niche where the Saviour

had been placed. Natural reverence, and the awful mystery before him, kept him from actually entering; but no such hesitation checked the impulsive Peter. Passing under the low door he went in, undismayed. The sepulchre was, indeed, empty, as John and the women had found; only the grave-linen was left: the bands for the body and limbs laid by themselves, and the cloth that had covered the face of the Dead, not lying with them, but, folded up, in a place by itself. Following his friend, John now entered, and saw that it was so. The great truth, as he himself tells us in long after years, now, for the first time, flashed on his mind, that Jesus had risen.[7] Neither he nor the other Apostles had, as yet, realized that it had been foretold in the Scriptures[8] that He would do so; for this would have explained the whole at once, and would have thrown light on the hitherto mysterious words of Jesus Himself respecting His resurrection.

[7] John 20. 8

[8] Ps. 16. 10.

Having seen for themselves the empty tomb, they thought like men, only of returning, to discuss with each other and with their brethren, what it could mean. But the women would not leave the spot. Wandering everywhere, they only cared to find Him whom they loved, if they could, for they fancied that the body had been removed to some other place. Mary of Magdala had, meanwhile, returned, and stood weeping at the door of the tomb; her spirit, like that of her companions, overborne with longing anxiety to find Him, if possible, and refusing to believe that she would not. The two Apostles had seen no angels, but the weeping woman was more highly favoured. Gazing into the sepulchre, the empty space where Jesus had lain was no longer untenanted, but, instead of the Redeemer, she saw two angels, in bright robes, one where the head, and the other where the feet had rested. They were there to comfort the broken heart, as, indeed, they had, doubtless, been before, though for the time they had remained unseen.

"Woman," said one, in a human voice, that disarmed fear, "why weepest thou?"

"Because," replied Mary, in broken accents, "they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

CHAP. LXIV.

As she said this, she turned and drew back into the open garden, hardly knowing what she did. A man now stood before her, in the simple dress of the humbler classes, and being in a garden, she naturally thought him the person employed in it. "Woman," said the stranger, strangely enough as it must have seemed to Mary, in the same words as the angels had used, "why weepest thou?—whom seekest thou?" "Sir," said Mary, taking it for granted, as great sorrow does, that the cause of her grief must be known to all—"if thou hast carried Him from this tomb, pray tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." She was a woman of means, and would see that He had a final and suitable resting-place.

No reply was given, except the repetition of her own name—"Mary." But the voice revealed the speaker. It was that of Jesus. She had not recognized the known, but now strangely etherealized features—the one "spiritual body" ever seen by human eyes—the corruptible changed into incorruption—the mortal into immortality. But the sound of that voice, so tenderly remembered, brought with it full recognition of the face and form.

"Rabbouni," said she, in the country tongue they both loved so well—"My Teacher!" and was about to fall on His neck in uncontrollable emotion.

"Touch me not," said He, drawing back, "for I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

Meanwhile, the other women had come near, and hearing and seeing what had passed, kneeled in lowly worship. As they approached, Jesus greeted them with the salutation they had, doubtless, often heard from His lips—"All hail!"—and the words, and the sight of Mary adoring Him, left them no question of its being their Lord. He had withheld Mary from any approach to the tender freedom of former days, but He now stood still while the lowly band, Mary doubtless among them, held Him by the feet, and did Him lowliest reverence. Then, as they kneeled, came the words, grateful to their hearts, "Be not afraid! Go,

tell my brethren to go into Galilee, and they will see me there."



So saying, He was gone.

Losing no time, Mary of Magdala, and the others, hurried back to Jerusalem, and found that, in the still early morning, the news had spread to all the Eleven, that their Master was alive, and had been seen both by her and by them. But it seemed too wonderful for simple minds to realize at once, and sounded only like an idle tale which they could not believe. It sufficed, however, to rally them, for the first time since Gethsemane; for that very night they once more assembled as of old.

No detailed narrative of the successive appearances of Jesus to His disciples, after His resurrection, has been left us, each narrative giving only special cases, which had particularly impressed the mind of the writer. It is evident, indeed, that He showed Himself on many occasions of which no record is preserved, for St. John expressly tells us,[9] in his summary of the Forty Days, that besides the sign in the case of Thomas, Jesus did many others before His disciples, which are not written in the Gospel bearing the Apostle's name, and He had promised that He would manifest Himself again, soon after His death, to those who continued faithful to Him.[10] Had we a full narrative of the mysterious interval between Calvary and the Ascension, it would doubtless illustrate more vividly than existing records permit, the fulness and variety of demonstration which alone accounts for the firm and triumphant proclamation of the Resurrection by the Apostles and early Church.

[9] Ch. 20. 21.

[10] John 14. 21.

One characteristic is common to all the appearances recounted: they never pass outside the purely spiritual bounds we instinctively associate with the mysterious existence on which Jesus had entered. Even when most closely touching the material and earthly, He is always seen speaking and acting only as a spirit, coming suddenly, revealing Himself in an imperceptibly increasing completeness which culminates at last in some unmistakable sign, and presently vanishing, as suddenly as He appeared. He

no longer acts or suffers as before His death, and even when condescending most to the seen and material, only does so to prove Himself, beyond question, the same Jesus as formerly, who in common human life, shared all the experiences and wants of His followers.[11] To some He made Himself known, as to Mary and the women, by a single word or by brief sentences, the voice carrying instant conviction with it: to others, in a lengthened communion, as with the disciples going to Emmaus; kindling their soul by the higher sense He gave to the Scriptures, and by a repetition of the symbolic "breaking of bread," which, on the last night, He had enjoined on the Eleven: to others again, as to Thomas, by an outward material proof from the wounds on His person; and, to still others, by joining them in their simple repast, as with the disciples on the shore of the Lake of Galilee.

[11] Ewald, vi. 87.

It would seem, from a notice by St. Paul,[12] that the first appearance, after that granted to the women, was vouchsafed to Peter, perhaps while still in the garden. The completeness of the Apostle's repentance had secured as complete a forgiveness, and Jesus could not forget that Peter's home at Capernaum had been His, or how true-hearted he had been from the very days of the Baptism on the Jordan, though he had failed for a moment, when off his guard. The look of reproach, mingled with love and pity, had melted Peter's heart while the denials were yet on his lips, and now, the look and tender words of the risen Christ, bound him to Him for ever. He had been the foremost in zeal for the meek and lowly Master, while still rejected and despised, but when that Master stood before him, the conqueror of death, and the glorified Son of God, his zeal rose to a passionate devotion that, henceforth, knew no abatement.

[12] 1 Cor. 15. 5.

The news of the resurrection spread fast among the disciples in Jerusalem; still it required time to reach all, and even when it spread, the fact was too great to be realized at once, and too contrary to previous expectations, to be other than slowly understood. Deep dejection reigned throughout the little Christian company. In spite of all their Master's

warnings, His death had come on them by surprise, and, as it seemed, had destroyed everything. Cut off suddenly from all the hopes of an earthly kingdom they had cherished, notwithstanding the constant lessons of Christ's life and words, and deeply distressed by the loss of their Teacher and Head, they appeared to be left helpless, and paralyzed. The horrors of the past few days engrossed their thoughts and conversation. They believed Him now in Paradise, but no one dreamed of a resurrection so soon. John had, indeed, risen in some measure to the grandeur of the truth, and Peter had even seen Him, but the bulk of the disciples had lost well-nigh all hope. The report of the empty grave and of the vision of angels and of their announcement that He was alive, was insufficient to break their gloom, and prolonged their perplexity without relieving it.

Midday had passed, and only floating rumours were, as yet, abroad. The disciples began to think of finally separating, and abandoning all hope; for, without their Master, they were without a leader. Two of them determined to go home to Emmaus, a village between seven and eight miles north-west of Jerusalem, on the high slope of the hills. The way to it was over hills, and through valleys, more and more barren as Jerusalem was left behind, but Emmaus itself looked down into a hollow through which a rivulet spread greenness and beauty. Vines and olive-trees, planted in terraces up the hill-side, and the white and red flowers of the almond-tree, now bursting into blossom in the valley, made the end of the journey a pleasant contrast to its beginning.[13]

[13] Furrer, 142.

The two travellers were not of the Twelve Apostles, and it is not even known whether they had been in the number of the Seventy. The name of the one is told us—Cleopas, a different word from Clōpas, the name of the husband of one of the Marys who waited on Christ, and, thus, no hint is furnished by it. The other has been variously fancied as Nathanael, Peter, or, even, Luke himself, but it is only conjecture. They were passing on their way, their conversation turning naturally on that of which their hearts were full—and of which they had heard and spoken so much that day. Was Jesus the Messiah or not? If so, how had things

 happened as they had? His life, His words, His miracles, seemed to show that He was the Messiah, but, on the other hand, how could the Messiah have been crucified?

Meanwhile, a stranger, going their way, overtook them, and, very possibly to their disappointment, joined them. He had heard how eagerly they were disputing and reasoning, so that it seemed only natural when He asked them what subject had so engrossed them. Half impatient that He should seem unacquainted with a matter so supreme to themselves, Cleopas answered—"That he could not have thought there was any one who had been to the feast in Jerusalem, who would ask the subject of their conversation, when such great things, still in every one's mouth, had happened in these last few days."

"What things?" asked the stranger.

"What but respecting Jesus of Nazareth?" replied Cleopas. "He was a prophet of God, a mighty worker of miracles, and a great teacher. All the people must own that He was that. Do you not know about Him? How our priests and Rabbis seized Him, and condemned Him to death, and forced Pilate to crucify Him? Yet we believed, as it seemed on the best grounds, that He was the Messiah, who should have delivered Israel. But it is now the third day since all this has happened. Some of the women belonging to our company, however, have created no little perplexity amongst us. They had gone early in the morning to the tomb, but found it empty, and came back, saying that angels had appeared to them, who told them that He was alive again. On this some of our number went to the sepulchre, and found the women right as to its being empty, but they did not see Jesus Himself."

It was clear that the spark of hope kindled by the first report, had been already extinguished.

The stranger had listened attentively, and now, to their surprise, began to chide them for their doubt, and entered into the matter that so engrossed them, with the earnestness of one who felt as supremely interested in their Master's cause as they were themselves, and with an intelligence that arrested their closest attention.

"What is there in all this, that makes you so dejected and despairing?" asked He. "O ye dull of understanding, and sluggish of heart! Why not grasp more clearly, and believe more readily, what is the burden of all the prophets? Had you been as intelligent, and as ready in your hearts as you should have been, to understand and accept the witness of Scripture, you would have seen that it had been prophesied, from the first, that the Messiah was to suffer and die, as Jesus has done. Let us examine whether the prophets do not show that the Christ—the Messiah—must needs have been thus lowly, entering into His glory only after suffering death, though you have foolishly imagined His kingdom was to come by force and miracle?"

The stranger was evidently a learned Rabbi, at least; and had won their anxious, respectful attention already, by the novelty and force of this appeal. But, now, as He journeyed on at their side, their wonder and delight increased, for He quoted passage after passage, from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures, and showed them how the whole spirit and contents of the Holy Books pointed to such a Messiah as He had indicated—a Messiah founding a spiritual, not a mere earthly kingdom, founding it by love and self-sacrifice, not by force. They had never heard such discourse. He threw light on the deep things of Scripture which made it a new book to them. They had been familiar with it from childhood, but now, for the first time, found that their Master, alike in His life and death, shone out from every page.

Such discourse shortened the road, and found them still eagerly listening as they approached Emmaus, the end of the journey. Climbing the hill path together, through the terraces of vines and olives, and passing under the village gate, they were presently at the house where the disciples were to stay. And, now, the stranger bade them adieu. What they had heard from Him, however, had interested them so much, that they longed to hear more. They begged Him, therefore, to lodge with them for the night, and this, the rather, as the day was far spent. Accepting the invitation, all three went into the house.

It must have been no small wonder to the Two, who the

mysterious stranger could be. Nothing in His dress or speech gave them a clue, and they did not know His features. But a feeling of reverence kept them from asking.

Simple refreshments were presently set before them—among the rest, bread and wine. The stranger, as was His due, had the place of honour at table, and it fell to Him to hand what was before them, to the others. Only the three were present.

Presently the Unknown, taking the bread, offered the usual benediction—just as Jesus had done; broke the bread, just as Jesus had broken it; handed it to them, just as Jesus had handed it. Bearing, voice, and manner were His. And now, as they look at Him more closely,—the veil He had assumed passes away, and the very Face and Form, also, were His.

It was He! Meanwhile, as they gazed in awful wonder and reverence, He vanished.

No instance given illustrates, more strikingly, the adaptation of the Risen Saviour's self-disclosures to the requirements of His disciples. Their minds were first enlightened and their hearts warmed, till there was no longer a danger of affecting their senses only, but a security of intelligent conviction, resting on impressions left by the discourse they had heard. They were gently led on till fully prepared, and then the APPEARANCE was granted in a way so inexpressibly touching and tender, that it no less fired their love than established their faith.

Left to themselves, the Two could speak only of what they had heard and seen—of how their hearts had glowed in their bosoms, as He talked with them along the road, and opened to them the Scriptures. Their ecstatic joy at having seen Him, whom they had known as the earthly Messiah, now unveiled to them as the Messiah, risen and glorified—the conqueror of death—can only be faintly imagined. Neither life nor death could ever efface the memory of it from their inmost hearts. But their brethren must know the great truth. Hastening, with quickened steps, back to Jerusalem, to reach it before the shutting of the gates, they found the Eleven, and a number of the disciples gathered together—

the amazing rumours of the day the one engrossing theme of discussion. Peter, it seemed, had told them that Jesus had appeared to him, and, now, the Two added their amazing narrative. It was a thing so transcendent, however, and so unheard of, that any one should rise from the dead, that the company still fancied the women, and Peter, and the Two, under some strange delusion. They could not credit their story as a matter of fact.

Mark 16. 14—18. Luke 24. 36—49. John 19. 19—23.

It was still Sunday, and the assembled disciples, with the others, had gathered at the table couches, to eat a simple evening meal together, before parting for the night. The doors were fast closed, for fear of any emissary of the high priests and Rabbis discovering them, and they were still discussing the strange reports they had heard, and justifying their incredulity. Suddenly, through the closed doors, a Form appeared in their midst, which they at once recognized as that of Jesus. Presently, the salutation they had heard so often, sounded from His lips—the common Jewish greeting—Shalōm Lâchem. Peace to you!

The sight terrified and alarmed them. They could not realize that it was really Jesus Himself, but fancied it was His spirit.

"Why are you in such fear," said He, "and why do you not, at once, without any such doubts and questionings in your minds, recognize me as Him who I really am?" His hands were, of course, exposed beneath the sleeves of His abba, and His feet could be seen through His sandals. Holding up the former, and showing the marks of the great iron nails of the cross in the palms, and pressing back His abba, and disclosing the wounds on His feet—He went on—"Look at my hands and my feet—see the wounds of the nails—and be satisfied that it is I, Jesus, myself, who speak. And, that you may know that it is not my spirit you see, but the same Master you knew of old, come near and touch me, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me have."

Evidence so convincing could leave no doubt, except from very joy at its completeness; for the return of their Lord, thus triumphant over the grave, was so stupendous a miracle that while they could not question it, their gladness would

scarcely let them think it real. But still further proof was to be given. Knowing how easily the idea might spread that His appearances were merely those of a disembodied spirit, He asked them to let Him share their meal. They had broiled fish,[a] and having set some before Him with wondering awe, He ate it in their sight. All doubt now fled: it was, indeed, their Risen Lord.

"Now that you are convinced that it is really I," continued Jesus, "let me remind you that the facts you have now verified—that I should die, and rise again from the dead—are the fulfilment of what I said to you while I was yet with you—that all that was written respecting me in the Scriptures, must be fulfilled in this way."

As the "Light of the World," He then proceeded to recall to their minds and explain more fully, the prophecies respecting Himself in the Books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms,—the three divisions under which all the Holy Books were classed by the Jews; and showed their wonderful vividness as inspired anticipations of what had really happened in His own person.[14]

14 Bava Bathra, xiv. 2

"You see thus," added He, after giving this summary of the testimony of Scripture, "that it was necessary, in the Divine Counsels, that instead of founding an earthly kingdom, as you expected, the Messiah should suffer as I have done, and that He should rise from the dead, the third day, as ye see has been the case with me. The purposes of God now further require that the need of repentance, and the promise of the remission of sins to be obtained through my death and resurrection, should be preached, henceforth, as the great end of all I have suffered, and as the Salvation I was sent as the Messiah to secure, not for Israel only but for all mankind. These truths you are to proclaim to all nations, but you are to begin at Jerusalem, that Israel may have still another opportunity of accepting me, and of being saved through my name, now I am risen and glorified; though they rejected me in my humiliation. And you, my disciples, are the witnesses through whom God will spread abroad this message of mercy to Jews and Heathen, and proclaim His new Heavenly Kingdom founded by me."

The wondering disciples now saw that He was about to leave them, once more. As He prepared to do so, however, He added:—

"Peace be with you! As my Father sent me, so I send you. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized, will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these miraculous signs will be granted those who believe, for a confirmation of their faith, and that they may win others. They will cast out devils in my name; they will speak with tongues new to them; they will take up serpents without harm to themselves; if they drink any deadly thing it will not hurt them; and they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

"To fit you for your great work I shall presently send you the Helper promised by my Father, but stay in the city till you are clothed with this power from on high."

There were only ten of the Eleven present, for Thomas was absent, but, these, He now gathered before Him. As an earnest of the fuller endowment, hereafter, He was about to impart to them a special consecration by the Holy Spirit, to their office as Apostles. He had, Himself, compared the influence and entrance of the Spirit to the breathing of the wind, and, now, prefacing His intended words by the symbolical act of breathing on the Ten—He said:

"Receive ye the Holy Spirit. The government of the Church is committed to your charge. As a special gift for your work as founders of my Kingdom, divine insight is granted you to 'discern the spirits' of men,[15] that so you may know their true state before God. Through you, therefore, henceforth, as through Me till now, He will announce the forgiveness of sins, and it will be granted by God to those to whom you declare it. Through you, moreover, He will make known to others that their sins are not forgiven, and to him to whom you are constrained to speak thus, to him his sins will not be forgiven by God till you announce their being so."

[15] 1 Cor. 12. 10
John 20. 22.

Having said this, He vanished from their sight.

It is impossible to realize the emotions of the little band

of Apostles and disciples at these appearances. They knew that Jesus had been put to death: they had fancied themselves permanently deprived of His presence and help, and they had not known what to think respecting Him. But when He stood amidst them, once more, after He had risen, a sudden and strange revolution took place in their minds. They saw before them Him whom they had revered as the Messiah while clothed in human weakness, now raised to an unimaginable glory which at once confirmed and sublimed their former faith. They saw Him victorious over the grave, and clothed with the attributes of the eternal world. In a moment, the whole sweep of the truth respecting Him, hitherto only half realized, had become a radiant fact, even to their senses. The hesitating and imperfect belief in His heavenly dignity, and power to fulfil all He had promised, here and hereafter, which had slowly rooted itself in their hearts while He still lived, had seemed, after all, from the catastrophe of these last disastrous three days, a fond and beautiful delusion. But, now, at length, as He stood amongst them, triumphant even over death, it broke all restraints and flooded their whole soul with sacred light as never before, for the revulsion from despondency to the purest and holiest joy gave it additional strength.

It is impossible to conceive the effect of such sights of their Risen Master, on the minds of those who were thus favoured with them. The whole life of one who had seen Him and stood near Him, perhaps touched Him, after He had risen, became a long dream of wonder. Such an one felt, henceforth, even in the midst of his commonest occupations, as if Christ were still, though unseen, beside him: he saw Him, as it were, radiant before his eyes: he seemed still to hear His words of infinite love, and lived in habitual communion with Him, as with One, hidden it might be, for the moment, in the upper light, but to be expected as a visible form, at any instant. We see this in every page of the Gospels and the Epistles.[16]

[16] Ewald, vi. 85.

Only the immeasurable force of the thought that the Son of God Himself, the true, glorified, Messiah, had appeared to them; not, as hitherto, in the veil of the flesh, but in a

heavenly transfiguration; victorious over death; that He had stood among them, had quickened, and inspired them; perhaps had let Himself even be reverently touched—could have created such effects. Henceforth, he, only, was recognized as an Apostle in the fullest sense, who had seen Him in His spiritual body during this mysterious interval, when He seemed ready to soar to heaven as His rightful home, and, though still on earth, was no longer of it. Nothing could be more amazing than the result of such a sight of Him thus glorified, on the Apostles. From despair they passed at once to triumphant confidence—from incapacity to believe that the Messiah could have suffered as He had done to the most fervent and exulting faith in Him as the Messiah, on account of these very sufferings. They became, suddenly, men into whom the very spirit of Christ seemed to have passed; their spiritual nature had been wholly changed, and they were bound to Him, henceforth, with a deathless, and ecstatic devotion.[17]

[17] Ewald, vi. 8.

The appearances vouchsafed during the day of the Resurrection had now ended. On the part of the priests and Rabbis there had been great anxiety, for they, as well as the disciples, had early heard the rumours of His having risen. Some of the watch, after having fled in terror before the descending angel, had come into the city, and reported what had happened. A hasty meeting of the chief men of the party had been held, and the whole matter laid before them. Their perplexity was extreme, but at last their Sadducee leaders invented a specious story. Not believing in angels, they affected to think that the soldiers had been frightened away by some clever trick of the disciples, who had thus got possession of the body of their Master. There were indeed, difficulties in the way of spreading such a story, but it would be fatal if the rumour spread that angels had appeared. The people would naturally think it a proof that Jesus had been what He said He was, and they would turn to Him with more ardour than ever. The guard were therefore instructed, with the inducement of large bribes, to say that they had fallen asleep, and found the body stolen when they woke. The hierarchy were aware that it was

CHAP. LXIV.

death for a sentry to sleep at his post, but removed this difficulty by the promise that, in case the story reached the ears of Pilate, they would explain that it was only an invention, to keep the people quiet.

A whole week elapsed before the next appearance recorded. On Sunday; known, henceforth, as the "first day of the week,"[18] in contrast to the Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day; and as, especially, "The Lord's Day;"[19]—the Eleven, having once more assembled, as they had done daily through the week, and continued to do, Jesus, honouring His resurrection day,[20] once more stood in the midst of them. Thomas, known as Didymus, or The Twin, had not been present on the Sunday before, and in his grave, earnest way, refused to believe that Jesus had risen and had appeared to the Ten, till he himself had had what he deemed indisputable proof. "Except I see in His hands the prints of the nails," said he, "and put my finger into them, and put my hand into His side, where the spear-thrust made the gash, I will not believe." No one could desire more to see his Master again, but his temperament demanded what he thought demonstration, of so amazing a fact as the rising of one from the grave.

18 John 20. 24—29.
19 Rev. 1. 10.
20 Acts 2. 46.

On this first Lord's day after the Resurrection, however, his doubts were for ever dispelled. The disciples had gathered in their common room, which held, at least, a hundred and twenty.[21] The doors, as before, had been carefully closed, for fear of spies from the Temple, and the approaches were, doubtless, carefully watched. Suddenly, however, the words were heard in the midst of the company —"Peace to you!"—and, looking up, Jesus stood before them. He had not been near, so far as the senses could perceive, when Thomas had uttered his doubts, but He knew them not the less. Turning to the faithful but still incredulous one—whose presence there showed how eagerly he wished to believe the transcendent news, Jesus, to his amazement, addressed him—

21 Acts 1. 15.

"Thomas, thou saidst thou wouldst not believe, unless thou couldst put thy finger in the wounds of my hands, and feet, and side. Reach hither thy finger—here are my hands;

and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing."

To hear his own words thus repeated by one who had not been visible when they were spoken: to see the hands, and feet, and side: to receive such condescension from one who he now felt was, indeed, his loved Master; yet no longer a mortal man, but the Lord of Life, the glorified Messiah who had triumphed over death, overwhelmed him with awe. No words could express his emotion. He could only utter his one deepest thought, that he had before him his Lord and his God.

"Thomas," said Jesus, "thou hast believed at last because thou hast seen me: blessed are they who, without having seen me, believe, as thou now dost, that I have risen from the dead."

Hitherto, the Risen Saviour, in all His appearances, so far as they are recorded, had designed to prove to His disciples that He was really alive again. Convinced of this, there was much to tell them, of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,"[22] which they were to spread abroad through the earth. Before His death, He had told them that He had many things to say to them, which were, as yet, too hard for them to understand or receive. These He had now to communicate; for what would have been incomprehensible before His sufferings and Resurrection,[23] was dark no longer, when seen in the strong light of the cross and the empty grave.

He did not, however, mingle among them and live in their midst as of old. They, doubtless, expected that now He was alive again on earth, He would once more gather them round Him, and stay permanently with them, and they even fancied, that surely now at last he would set about the establishment of that earthly kingdom of Israel, to which they so fondly clung.[24] But to have stayed thus familiarly with them, was no longer in keeping with His glorified immortality. Till they, too, had put on incorruption, He was separated from them, by the infinite distance and difference of time and eternity. They belonged to the former, He, now, to the latter.

[22] Acts 1. 3.

[23] John 16. 12.

[24] Acts 1. 6.

He showed Himself, therefore, to them in such a way that they could never count on His taking up His abode with them again, as in former days; that so they might be accustomed gradually to His absence, as in no measure breaking or weakening their connection with Him. He, hence, vouchsafed them only intermitted appearances; that, on the one hand, they might be in no doubt of His really having risen from the dead; and, on the other, that they might become familiar with the idea of His leaving them. He showed Himself as One about to quit the world, and as no longer belonging to it, but delaying His departure for a time, for their good. His intercourse with them was, thus, almost like that of the angels with their fathers in the early ages, when they came to their tents, conversed with them, and even ate and drank what was offered them, but, presently, left again and disappeared, till some new occasion brought them back.[25]

[25] J. J. Hess, Gesch. Jesu, iii. 413 (1773).

Hence we are no more told the place of His stay in these forty days, or of His journeys, or other details, as otherwise we might have expected. He appears only at intervals, and we have no trace whence He has come, or whither He vanishes. He does not travel back with His disciples to Galilee after the feast, as was usual, but only names a mountain on which He will meet them. They never ask Him, as He is about to leave them, whither He is going, or, when He comes, whence He has done so? His whole bearing towards them was like that to Mary of Magdala—"Think not that my Resurrection restores me to you as the companion of your daily life. Rejoice not over my reappearance as if I were to stay now, abidingly, with you. I go to my Father, and your Father—to my God, and yours."

He had told the women at the sepulchre, to say to His disciples that He would meet them on a mountain in Galilee, which He named, and He had, doubtless, repeated this to the company when in their midst. The most of them were Galilæans, and would return home after the feast week. Galilee had been, moreover, the special scene of His labours, and of His success, and a greater number could be gathered together there than in Judea. Jerusalem was not to be

their scene of action as yet. They could not begin their great Apostolic work while their Master was still on earth, and, besides, they needed not only many counsels before He left them, but the power which the Holy Spirit, who was not yet given, could impart. When they returned, to attend the Feast of Pentecost, seven weeks after the Resurrection, they would receive their full heavenly consecration.

The future was still unknown even to the Apostles, and hence, though they held themselves at the command of their Lord, the interval before He required their permanent service, saw them, once more, at their former callings. They seem to have had no idea that this visit to their homes would be the last they would ever make to them as such, or that, within a few weeks, they would remove to Jerusalem, to stay there for a time, and then wander forth to all lands, and see their native country, rarely, or never again. But the long attendance on their Master had prepared them for finally leaving everything for Him, and had fitted them, unconsciously, for the duties that lay before them.

Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael of Cana, John and James, sons of Zabdai, and two whose names are not given, apparently because they were not Apostles, had, among others, betaken themselves to the well-known shores of the Lake of Galilee, and had quietly set themselves, once more, to the occupation familiar to most of them—that of fishermen. They had been out on the Lake all night, but had caught nothing, and were rowing to land in the early dawn, when they saw on the shore a stranger, whom they could not recognize in the twilight, as any one they knew. It was nothing strange that a person should come to them as they were landing, to buy their catch. The simple habits of the East, moreover, made it common to sell even single fish, which were prepared and cooked on the spot, in the open air, by the buyer. They thought nothing, therefore, of the stranger presently asking them, with a kindly familiarity not unusual in antiquity in addressing the humbler classes,[26] "Children, have ye anything to eat?"; as if wishing to buy for his morning meal. "Nothing at all," cried the fishermen.

[26] Meyer, Kom iii. 573.

Matt. 28. 16. John 21. 1—24

"If you cast your net once more on the right side of the boat, you will find fish," said the stranger, and they, thinking, perhaps, that he had noticed a shoal they had overlooked, were only too glad to do so. But, now, the net sank, overloaded, so that they could hardly draw it after them as they rowed to land.

There was no further question who the stranger could be; for what was this incident but the repetition of a well-remembered miracle of their Master, almost at the same spot? "It is the Lord," whispered John to Peter. The name was enough. They were only about a hundred yards from land, but the ardent, impulsive Peter could not wait. He was standing, naked, in the boat, after having swum round with the net, to sweep the waters, as is the custom on the Lake of Tiberias still; but he instantly drew on his upper garment, and, jumping into the water, swam ashore, to be the first to see if it really were his Master. The others, meanwhile, were slowly pulling to the shore, and presently reached it. The beach had been bare a moment before, but now, strangely enough, they saw a fire burning, with a little fish on it, and bread at hand, as if the stranger had intended them for Himself.

"If you would like to eat with me," said He, "bring some of the fish you have just caught."

Peter had not dared to speak, for the awe of his Lord's heavenly greatness, as one belonging, now, to a higher life, was on him. But he instantly ran to the boat, dripping, as he stood, and dragged ashore the net, which was found to have caught a hundred and fifty-three large fish, without being rent. All were convinced that it was Jesus, but they were dumb with amazement; and though they wished to ask, their awe, and their very eyesight, which told them that it was no other than their Master, kept them from doing so.[27]

[27] Chrysostom, *in loc.*

They had sat down on the white, dry beach, round the fire, at His invitation, and He now, once more, as of old, took His place as Head of the little group. Taking first bread, and then the fish, He divided them, just as He had done while He was with them, and, as He did so, His face

and bearing were so exactly what they had been, that the fear produced by the suddenness of His appearance, and the undefined difference in Him which had struck them at first, soon abated. His every word was now doubly weighty, and hence John gives us a more than usually circumstantial narrative of what followed. The meal being finished, He turned to Peter, as if to show him by a further proof, how entirely his shortcoming had been forgiven, and the completeness of his restoration to his apostolate. He commonly called him Peter, but now addressed him as He had done three years before, when they first met,[28] and only once since, when he made his grand confession of belief that his Master was the Messiah.[29] "Simon, son of Jonas," asked He, "carest thou for me more than my other disciples?" "Yes, Lord," answered Peter, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Go and feed my little ones—my lambs," replied Jesus; "for love to me, care for the spiritual wants of all who know and love me, as a shepherd sees that his flock be duly fed." The same question, in the same words, was then repeated. "Yes, Lord," answered Peter, more eagerly than before, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Then, tend my sheep," replied Jesus. "Not only nourish, but care for them, as committed to thy charge." A third time the same question was asked—"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" The treble repetition had something in it tender and warning. It was not a reproof, yet it was fitting that the disciple who, a few days before, had thrice denied Him, should be made to think as often of his weakness. Peter felt it, and almost thought that Jesus doubted his trustworthiness. "Lord," said he, "Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Then," replied Jesus, "feed my sheep—the oversight of my flock is thine, to see that they are fed."

[28] John 1 42.

[29] Matt. 16. 18.

"Hear now," He continued, "what awaits you. Verily, verily, I say to you, Hitherto you have girded yourself and gone whither you pleased, and you do so still; but, in your old age you will stretch forth your hands helplessly, and will give yourself up to others, who will gird you with chains, and lead you off where you would fain not go—to the place

CHAP. LXIV.

of judgment." An assurance of safety for the present, and a timely warning of what the future would bring! There was a brief pause, and then the words, "Follow me," summoned the Apostle once more, as of old; but spoken this time, by the risen and glorified Saviour—it called him to follow Him in a martyr's death, and then, to the glory beyond.

Peter, taking the last words literally, fancied he was to follow his Master as before, and as Jesus seemed now leaving them, had done so a few paces, when, turning round, he saw John coming after him. Unwilling to separate from one endeared by long companionship as a fellow-disciple, he, therefore, ventured to ask, in hope that John, too, would be allowed to come with them—"Lord, what will this man do?" But things were not as in old days of common familiar communion. "If I should please that he live till my return, why should you seek to know it?" replied Jesus. "From you I require that you follow me in the path in which I have gone before you."

St. Paul, about twenty-five years after, mentions another appearance,[30] which was no doubt the same as is related, more fully, by St. Matthew.[31] It took place in a mountain, appointed for the purpose by Jesus Himself, doubtless as a well-known spot. Here, a large number of disciples, including, as we know, the Eleven, gathered at the time fixed. It was a moment of supreme solemnity, for it was the close, so far as we know, of His ministry in Galilee. A mountain had been chosen, alike for privacy and because all who might come would be able to see their Master. Over five hundred had gathered when Jesus appeared in their midst; some of them long since dead when Paul wrote, but the majority still alive. With beautiful frankness, the Evangelist tells us that some, who likely had had no other witness, still doubted a miracle so stupendous, but they were so few that he could say of the multitude, as a whole, that they worshipped Jesus as their Lord.

Before this numerous assemblage Jesus declared Himself, in the loftiest sense, the Messiah. "All power," said He, "is given me, in heaven and in earth. As I have before

30 1 Cor. 15. 6; written A.D. 59. (Hemsen's Paulus).

31 Matt. 28. 16—20.

commissioned my Apostles, so now I commission you all, in the fulness of the authority thus given me, to go into the whole world, and announce to all men that I live, and am exalted to be the Lord and the Messiah. Go, gather disciples to me from among all nations, and consecrate them by baptism, to faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, by whom God will speak and act through your means. What commands I have given you as my disciples, give you to them, and urge them to keep them. Nor must you think yourselves alone while thus working in my name, for lo, I am, and shall be, with you always, till the end of the world." As at the first, so, now, at the last, the WORD was the only weapon by which His Kingdom was to be spread. Resting on PERSUASION and CONVICTION from the beginning, it was left on the same basis now that He was about to ascend to heaven.

Only two or perhaps three more appearances are recorded—one to James alone, and one to all the Apostles.[32] The last known meetings with the Eleven took place immediately before the Ascension. It was the Parting for Ever, so far as outward and visible communion on earth was concerned—the final delegation of the interests of His Kingdom to them, as His chosen heralds and representatives. They were instructed to wait in Jerusalem till the promise of the Father was fulfilled; that He would send the Holy Spirit to them, as their Helper and Advocate, in place of their departed Master—a promise which Jesus Himself had made known to them. "For John," said He, "truly baptized with water, but the promise which even he announced, that you would be baptized with the Holy Spirit, will be fulfilled before many days."

The Apostles, acquainted as they were with the Old Testament prophecies, which foretold that the fulness of the Holy Spirit would be poured out in the times of the Messiah,[33] seem to have fancied that there was an indirect promise of the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, as they conceived it, in these words. It appears as if an interval had elapsed—apparently only a part of the same day, between the appearance at which the renewed assurance of the

[32] 1 Cor. 15. 7. Acts 1. 3—8.

[33] Joel 3. 1, 2. Acts 2. 16.

bestowal of the Holy Spirit was given, and that at which the question they were now to ask was put. When they had come together again, Jesus once more stood among them, and then—so hard is it to uproot fixed preconceptions—they resolved to find out, if possible, whether they had any grounds for their fond hopes.

"Lord," asked they, "wilt Thou at this time restore the fallen kingdom of the Israelitish nation?" They had not yet received the illumination of the Spirit, which was to raise them at once and for ever above such narrow and national views, and were still entangled in Jewish fancies, which regarded the Messiah as sent to the Jewish people, as such, for its earthly glory as well as spiritual good.

Jesus would not answer such a question. There was much in their expectations which would never be realized; yet the gift of the Spirit would really be the true setting up of the Kingdom of the Messiah. Of its final proclamation and full establishment in its glory, which would take place at His final return, He would say nothing. It lay hidden in the depths of the future, and was of no advantage to them to know. "It is of no use to you," said He, "to know the time or the circumstances of these great revolutions in the ages to come. The Father has kept these as a secret of His own omniscience. Be it enough for you to know what will happen immediately on my departure. You will receive the powers of the Holy Spirit in rich measure, and inspired by these, and prepared by them in all points, you will go forth as witnesses for me, and of my resurrection, not only to Jerusalem and Judea, but to hated Samaria, and to the heathen throughout the whole earth; for mine is a universal kingdom, open to all mankind, without distinction of race, or rank; of bond or free; of barbarian or Greek; of Jew or Gentile."

This last interview had taken place in Jerusalem, but He had left it before He closed, leading them out towards Bethany. He may have walked through the well-known streets, veiled from His enemies, or He may have appointed the meeting-place for them, where He had so often, in His last days, retired in their company. The place where He

assembled them is not minutely recorded, but was on the Mount of Olives. It was the last time they were to see Him. He had prepared them, as far as their dulness made possible, for His leaving them, and had fitted them to receive the gift of the Spirit, which, within a few days, would illuminate their intellects and hearts.

He wished, however, to leave them in such a way that they should not think He had simply vanished from them, and wait for his present re-appearance. He would show them, as far as it could be shown, that He returned from the earth to His Father; that God took Him to Himself as He had taken Elias. They would be able to tell men, when they asked where He now was, that they had seen Him leave the world, and pass through the skies to the eternal kingdoms, in His human body; to sit down at the right hand of God. The thought—HE LIVES: HE IS WITH the FATHER! was, henceforth, to be the stay and joy of His followers in all ages.

We know not with what last parting words He let them see He was, now, finally, to leave them. All that is told us is, that He gave them His blessing, with uplifted hands. Step by step, He had raised their conceptions of Him nearer the unspeakable grandeur of His true nature and work. At first the Teacher, He had, after a time, by gradual disclosures, revealed Himself as the Son of God, veiled in the form of man; and, now, since His crucifixion and resurrection, He had taught them to see in Him the Messiah, exalted to immortal and divine majesty, as the conqueror of death and the Lord of all.

The transcendent miracle which closed His earthly communion with His chosen ones is most fully narrated by St. Luke:—

"When He had spoken these things, while they were looking at Him, He was taken up into heaven,[34] and a cloud received Him out of their sight"—that cloud which symbolized the presence of God. "And as they were gazing earnestly into the heavens, as He ascended, behold two men stood by them, in white apparel, and said to them—'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into the heavens?

[34] Acts 1. 9–11. Mark 16 19, 20. Luke 24. 51.

CHAP. LXIV

This same Jesus, who is even now taken from you into heaven, will come, in the same way as ye have seen Him go.'"

[35] Pressel, Leben Jesu, 558.

"Earth,[35] thou grain of sand on the shore of the Universe of God; thou Bethlehem, amongst the princely cities of the heavens; thou art, and remainest, the Loved One amongst ten thousand suns and worlds, the Chosen of God! Thee will He again visit, and then thou wilt prepare a throne for Him, as thou gavest Him a manger cradle; in His radiant glory wilt thou rejoice, as thou didst once drink His blood and His tears, and mourn His death! On thee has the Lord a great work to complete!"

# NOTES TO VOLUME II.

---

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

[a] According to the traditions of the Rabbis, Joshua, on his distribution of the country, had made the fishing in the Lake of Galilee free to all, so that their nets, &c., did not interfere with the navigation.—*Bava Kama*, lxxxi. 1, 2. Nowadays, the fishing is a monopoly of the Turkish Government, and is virtually extinct.

Jerome translates Capernaum as "The Lovely," from כְּפַר נָעִים (Kephar Naim). Origen, on the contrary, translates it "The Village of Consolation" (כְּפַר נַחוּם)

[b] Had He gone with Peter He would have cured the apostle's mother-in-law, without waiting till after He came from the synagogue next day.

[c] The Jews, in their extravagant way, spoke of "possession" as having characterized all ages, but there is no notice of it in the Old Testament, unless the case of Saul be supposed to be an instance of it, which is doubtful.

[d] Ha! is the proper translation of ἔα, which is not the imperative of ἐάω, but an interjection.

ἦν διδάσκων, ēn didaskōn (Mark i. 21), marks the continuance of his teaching, as a stated practice.

[e] The New Testament leaves us in no doubt of the belief in the reality of these demoniacal possessions, on the part of Jesus and the Evangelists, and to my mind this at once closes the question. Modern criticism has sought to attribute the phenomena associated with possession, to physical or mental causes only, but the fact that disease takes the same forms from apparently natural causes as it assumed from the action of evil spirits, leaves the possibility of its being associated with their presence in the cases recorded in the New Testament, wholly untouched. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. To quote the foolish superstitions of the Rabbis respecting the relations of demons to our race, as a reason for discrediting the belief in "possession" in any case, is as absurd as to urge the fantastic notions of the ignorant respecting the spirit world at large, as a ground for turning Sadducee and denying the existence of spirits altogether. Nor is it worthy of more weight to trace the belief among the Jews, in spirits good and bad, in greater or lesser measure to Eastern sources. It would be as reasonable to reject belief in the immortality of the soul, because it was more clearly held in Egypt than in Palestine. Truth is truth, from whatever quarter it may reach us, and that would be a narrow theology which would limit revelations, for untold ages, to the uplands of Judea. The light may have shone most brightly there, nor is it a question that it did so, but who can tell how many rays shone down on other lands through rifts in the clouds that only too darkly covered them?

The fact, corroborated by the widest evidence, that there are still seen in half-enlightened countries, such as India, phenomena which seem explicable only on the theory of "possession" is striking. Take, for instance, the following extract descriptive of a scene witnessed in India by the writer:*—"The circle is formed; the fire is lit: the offerings are got ready—goats and fowls, and rice, and pulse, and sugar, and ghee, and honey, and white chaplets of oleander blossoms and jasmine buds. The tom-toms are beaten more loudly and rapidly, the hum of rustic converse is stilled, and a deep hush of awe-struck expectancy holds the motley assembly. Now, the low rickety door of the hut is quickly dashed open. The devil-dancer staggers out. Between the hut and the dark shadow of the sacred banyan, lies a strip of moonlit sand; and as he passes this, the devotees can clearly see their priest. He is a tall, haggard, pensive man, with deep-sunken eyes and matted hair. His forehead is smeared with ashes, and there are streaks of vermilion and saffron over his face. He wears a high conical cap, white, with a red tassel. A long robe, or *angi*, shrouds him from neck to ankle. On it

* Demonolatry, by R. C. Caldwell, Esq., Contemporary Review, Feb., 1876

are worked, in red silk, representations of the goddess of small-pox, murder, and cholera. Round his ankles are massive silver bangles. In his right hand he holds a staff or spear, that jingles harshly every time the ground is struck by it. The same hand also holds a bow, which, when the strings are pulled or struck, emits a dull booming sound. In his left hand the devil-priest carries his sacrificial knife, shaped like a sickle, with quaint devices engraved on its blade. The dancer, with uncertain staggering motion, reels slowly into the centre of the crowd, and there seats himself. The assembled people show him the offerings they intend to present, but he appears wholly unconscious. He croons an Indian lay in a low dreamy voice, with drooped eyelids and head sunken on his breast. He swings slowly to and fro, from side to side. Look! You can see his fingers twitch nervously. His head begins to wag in a strange uncanny fashion. His sides heave and quiver, and huge drops of perspiration exude from his skin. The tom-toms are beaten faster, the pipes and reeds wail out more loudly. There is a sudden yell, a stinging, stunning cry, an ear-piercing shriek, a hideous abominable gobble-gobble of hellish laughter, and the devil-dancer has sprung to his feet, with eyes protruding, mouth foaming, chest heaving, muscles quivering, and outstretched arms swollen and straining. Now, ever and anon, the quick sharp words are jerked out of the saliva-choked mouth—'I am God, I am the true God!' Then all around him, since he and no idol is regarded as the present deity, reeks the blood of sacrifice. . . . Shrieks, vows, imprecations, prayers, and exclamations of thankful praise, rise up, all blended together in one infernal hubbub. Above all, rise the ghastly guttural laughter of the devil-dancer, and his stentorian howls—'I am God, I am the only true God!' He cuts and hacks, and hews himself, and not very unfrequently kills himself there and then. Hours pass by. The trembling crowd stands rooted to the spot. Suddenly the dancer gives a great bound into the air; when he descends he is motionless. The fiendish look has vanished from his eyes. His demoniacal laughter is still. He speaks to this and that neighbour quietly and reasonably. He lays aside his garb, washes his face at the nearest rivulet, and walks soberly home, a modest, well-conducted man?"

The Jewish superstitions respecting demons were very curious. The chief of the diabolical empire was Beelzebub, a Phenician god, but the Persian Aeschma Daeva, also was transferred to Judaism as Asmodeus, and with him an endless crowd of other spirits, or "devs,"—Asahel, Sammael, and the like,—who were unknown to earlier and purer ages.—*Ewald's Geschichte*, iv. 269. *Gfrörer*, i. 395. *Henoch*, c. 6. f. *Keim, Jes. v. N.* ii. 187. According to the Book of Henoch, the demons are the souls of the giants who corrupted themselves with the daughters of men, but Josephus regarded them as the spirits of dead men.—*Bell. Jud.* vii. 6. 3. They were so numerous that every man has 10,000 of them on his right hand, and 1,000 on his left. It was their delight to work all possible evils on men and even on beasts, and hence all the sicknesses and calamities that happened to living creatures were ascribed to them. Even headaches had a special demon who caused them.

The casting out of these demons was, thus, a main task of Jewish professional life, though evil spirits trembled especially before the Rabbis, as they knew the secret names of God. The angels had told Noah the cures of all the diseases caused by demons, and their modes of temptation, and how the virtues of plants could overcome them; and Noah had written them in a book known to the Rabbis.—*Jubilees*, 10. In all cases, however, it was the name of God in the exorcism, that was supremely potent. Forms of words were used, which acted as spells. One of many such formulæ, preserved in the Talmud, is as follows:—"O thou demon who art hidden; thou son of foulness, thou son of abomination, thou son of uncleanness, be thou cursed, crushed, anathematized, as Schamgas, Marigas, and Istemaa."—*Sabbath Bab.* 67 a. Strange gesticulations, burnings of incense, tying and unloosing of knots, and the use of certain plants, were among the other aids of exorcism. "Take incense," says Raphael to Tobit. "and lay part of the heart and the liver of the fish on it, and burn the incense, and the demon will smell it and fly away, and come back no more."—Tob. vi. 16, 17. The root Baara, which grew near Machaerus, and was red like flame, throwing out fiery gleams by night, was a great remedy. When any one tried to pull it up, it shrank into the ground, and, if he left any part of it in the earth, he died. Those who gathered it, therefore, wisely tied a dog to it, and forced him to drag it up. When the root broke the dog died; but the root could now be handled with safety. When brought near one possessed with a demon, the demon fled, and the sick man got better.—*Bell. Jud.* vii. 6. 3. Josephus also tells another mode of exorcism which he saw employed before Vespasian, his sons, his staff, and many of his soldiers, by a Jew named Eleazar. The magician put a ring that had in it a root of one of the plants mentioned by Solomon, to the nostrils of the possessed man, and after doing so he drew out the demon through his nostrils. When the man forthwith fell down, he abjured the devil to return to him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he had composed. And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set, a little way off, a cup or basin, full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let all know that he had left the man, which he did. —*Ant.* vii. 2. 5. Compare with this the grand simplicity of the Gospels when the Word

of Jesus alone is used; and does not one see the contrast between reality and superstitious wildness?

See Langen's *Judenthum*, 297—331; Winer, *R.W.B.*, *Art.* "Besessene;" *Bibel. Lex. Art.* "Besessene;" Herzog, *Art.* "Dämonische;" Trench *on Miracles*, 151 ff; Keim, *Jesu v. N.* ii. 188—204; Hausrath, i. 110, 112, &c., &c., &c.

A passage from Canon Tristram's *Great Sahara* bears curiously on this interesting subject. I append it, with a letter I have had the honour of receiving from him on the subject. The scene was Algiers; the *dramatis personæ* members of a fanatical Mussulman sect.

"The floor of the centre was paved with bright tesselated tiles. In the midst squatted the dervishes, or Beni Yssou. Round three sides the musicians sat on the ground, beating large tambourines and swinging their heads as they accompanied their voices in a low measured chant, which never varied more than three semitones. Nothing could sound to our ears more monotonous than this unvaried wailing cadence, no music less capable of inspiring frenzy. The fourth side of the square was occupied by a young man sitting cross-legged before a low table, on which lay a bundle of papers and a long lighted candle. Near him was a chafing-dish over which he frequently baked the tambourines. One of the musicians, in lieu of a tambourine, held a huge earthen jar, with a parchment cover stretched over its mouth, which, by incessant drumming produced a bass groan deeper even than the other instruments. Shrouded spectators occupied the background; and a few Moors, and one or two Frenchmen, the front and sides, without the pillars. We were accommodated with a form, and courteously supplied with coffee and pipes from time to time. Meanwhile the courtyard filled, and became a vapour-bath. The dervishes having now worked up the steam, a huge negro, with grizzled-grey moustache, rose, plunged forward with a howl, and swayed his body to and fro. He was supported by the attendants, stripped of his turban and outer garments, and accommodated with a loose white burnous; he then danced an extempore saraband in front of the lights. Meanwhile, he had been anticipated in his excitement by a little boy in the rear, whom we had noticed on the stairs behind, for the last twenty minutes, gradually working himself into an ecstasy, rolling his head and swaying himself on his seat, apparently unconscious and unobserved. The black had now become outrageous; his eyeballs glowed and rolled as he grunted and growled like a wild beast. The musicians plied the sheep-skins with redoubled energy, and the din became deafening. The negro craved for aliment. They brought him a smith's shovel at a red heat. He seized it, spit on his fingers, rubbed them across its heated edge, found it not sufficiently tender, blew on it, and struck it many times with the palm of his hand. He licked it with his tongue, found it not yet to his taste, and handed it back to the attendants with evident disgust; squatted down again, glared carnivorously, and was gratified by an entremet of a live scorpion. This he ate with evident relish, commencing carefully with the tail; but his voracity was still unabated. Next, a naked sword was handed to him, which he tried to swallow, but failed, the weapon being slightly curved, and about a yard long. He recommenced the saraband, brandishing the naked sword after a fashion very promiscuous, and not at all satisfactory to the spectators, as he cut the candle to pieces, and made the musicians dive to avoid him. He then attempted to bore his cheek with the point: then to pierce himself in the abdomen; setting the hilt at times against a pillar, then against the ground. A friendly fanatic assisted him by jumping on his shoulders, but all to no purpose. He was evidently, for the nonce, one of the pachydermata; his hide would rival the sevenfold shield of Ajax. Now several maniacs simultaneously howl, stagger forth to the centre, and repeat the same extravagances; not omitting the dainty taste of scorpions. Three of them at length kneel before the presiding Marabout, or chief of the dervishes, who benevolently feeds them with the leaf of the prickly pear, which they bite with avidity, and masticate in large mouthfuls, spines and all. Others repeat the shovel exploit; and one sturdy little fellow, a Marocain, naked to the waist, balances himself on his stomach on the edge of a drawn sword, held up, point and hilt, by two men. Then he stands on it, supporting a tall man on his shoulders. Altogether, the din of the musicians, the pleased "Sah, sah" of the spectators, the howls of the maniacs with their waving figures and dishevelled hair (for the dervishes do not shave), the heat and stench of the apartment, the wild confusion of the spectacle, might make a visitor fancy he was looking on some mad, unearthly revel, where fanaticism had turned fiendish, and demoniac worship domineered it over men."—*The Great Sahara*, by H. R. Tristram, M.A. London, 1860. 12—15.

The following is an extract from Canon Tristram's letter, to which I have referred:—

"I need hardly say that I thoroughly agree with your views on demoniacal possession, but I fear I cannot aid you by supplying any facts with which you are not already familiar. In the first chapter of my book, *The Great Sahara*, I gave a full description of what I witnessed, certainly not overdrawn, but I have nothing to add to it. I certainly never received any rational physical explanation of the eating of prickly pear-leaf, the extraordinary hardness of the skin, muscles, &c.; and the whole is in complete accord with what we read of demoniacs in the New Testament.

"One thing is certain, these feats are not jugglery. Jugglers are well known in these countries, and perform as they do here, but no native ever dreams of confounding the two. The dervish performs only when wrought up to this state of frenzy, and cannot do anything extraordinary at other times; and the people all believe it to be by a species of supernatural possession. I never heard of the exhibition except as a religious one. There are yet stranger stories told of the feats of these 'possessed' dervishes; but I only state what I have myself seen. It was not that the spine of the prickly pear, &c., did not hurt them; it did not *prick* them. I am not prepared to affirm that it is demoniacal possession, but I should be very far from denying it. If we believe, as we do, that we are living in the midst of a spirit world, who shall say what manifestations may not be possible, if God permit them?"

[f] The Rabbis say, He who meditates on the Law of God by "day," and spends the night in prayer, will never hear evil tidings.—*Berachoth* f. 14. 1.

[g] Jesus uses the two words—πόλεις, cities; and κωμοπόλεις, country towns possessing a synagogue.

[h] Greswell (*Har. Evan.* 48) makes the date of the circuit from June to September.

[i] Leprosy could not be readily caught by contact. To sleep with a leper might give it (Winer), and it was, as I have said, hereditary, but it was not contagious in the ordinary sense.—*Trench, Miracles* 211. Yet popular feeling, doubtless, thought it so, for even in Spain at this day it is universally believed that even a leprous corpse gives leprosy to corpses round it in the churchyard.—*Borrow's Bible in Spain.*

[k] Abigail falls at David's feet (1 Sam. xxv. 24). The Shunammite fell at the feet of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 37). The servant falls at the feet of his fellow-servant (Matt. xviii. 29), and so on.

"Lord" (κύριος) was the equivalent of our "Master," "Sir"—or of the French "Monsieur" or German "Herr." It is used by a son to a father (Matt. xxi. 30), by a servant to a master (Matt. xiii. 27), to the Roman Procurator (Matt. xxvii. 63), and even in the respectful intercourse of daily life.

[l] It is doubtful, however, whether the examination of the leper was still left to the priests in the days of Jesus, as the Rabbis, in their hostility to the priesthood, had managed, under Hillel, to make a rule that a leper might be examined by any one, and on his declaration was to be pronounced clean by the priest. The purification would still, however, rest with the priest.—*Derenbourg, Palestine,* 186.

[m] συνήρχοντο. Imperfect of repeated and continuous action. See Winer, *Grammatik,* 252.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

[a] The Rabbis are mentioned by different names in different passages of the Gospels. 1. They are called Scribes (γραμματεῖς)—the equivalent of the Hebrew Sopherim (from ספר Saphar—to write. The Rabbinical law was known as the "words of the Sopherim." Ezra was regarded as the founder of the order, and was specially known as Ezra the Scribe. It was their special function to promote reverence for the Law, by devoting themselves to its study, teaching it to the people, and securing its transmission intact by the most careful transcription. Their decisions on various points, at first transmitted to each generation orally, were finally collected in the Talmud, and overlaid the divine original with endless subtleties and refinements, known as "the traditions of the Fathers."

2. A second name was "lawyers" (νομικοι, nomikoi), and a third (3) νομοδιδάσκαλοι, nomodidaskaloi, "doctors of the Law." Acts v. 34. They are, also, often referred to as "the Pharisees," from the great majority belonging to that party; but all Rabbis were not Pharisees, nor all Pharisees Rabbis. In the same way, many priests were Rabbis, but many Rabbis were not priests.

[b] Dr. Thomson (*Land and Book*) supposes the house to have been like one of the Arab houses of the present day—a low one-story building with a flat roof, sloping downwards to the back. By the courtyard he supposes is meant a space enclosed, before the house, by a rough stone wall, a door in which furnished the means of entrance.

Dr. Delitzsch (*Ein Tag in Capernaum*, 40) supposes the house was built on four sides of a hollow square: two windows on each side facing the inner space. This interior court, Sepp thinks, might have an awning over it, and be the place where Jesus taught (*Leben Jesu*, ii. 276). But was Peter able to boast of a house like this, which was, rather, four houses built together?

Roskoff (*Art.* "Dach." in *Bibel Lexicon*), Lightfoot (*in. loc.*), Ewald (v. 375), think the house was of two stories. Keim, Hausrath, and Thompson think it was of one.

[c] Delitzsch supposes the opening was made by lifting up a square patch of bricks from an aperture in the roof, used in summer as a way from within, but closed in winter and not yet, at the time, re-opened. A slight framework over this in the dry months would keep out the sun, while it admitted the air, and a stair from the room below would give easy access to the roof, on which a great part of the time is spent in Palestine, in summer, in the mornings and evenings.—*Ein Tag*, n. 42.

[d] "When it was day, we all took up our beds—I my sheet and my shawl, the rest their cotton or straw mats, which they rolled up and put in a corner."—*Furrer, Wanderungen*, 115.

[e] Latin, *Publicanus*, one connected with the revenue, or *publicum*. The farmers of the revenue were called publicans, says Ulpian—"quia fruuntur publico"—because they live from the public revenues.

[f] Even among the publicani were some whom all men praised. The towns of Lesser Asia raised inscriptions to the father of Vespasian, as "the good publican." Josephus speaks of the Publican Johannes, in Cæsarea, as the representative of the religious interests of the people, and the Talmud praises Rabbi Zeira as one who lightened, not increased, the public burdens.—*Suet. Vesp.* 1. *Jos. Bell. Jud.* ii. 14. 4. *Lightfoot*, 295, 344.

[g] Buxtorf gives the list of things unbecoming in a Rabbi, as follows:—Six things are to be condemned in a disciple of the Wise (that is, of a Rabbi, and, of course, much more so in a Rabbi himself.) 1. To go out to the street, after anointing himself. 2. To go out at night alone. 3. To go out with patched shoes. 4. To speak with a woman, or hold discourse with her. (How this touched Jesus, in the eyes of the disciples, at the well of Sychar!) 5. *To sit down to eat with the common people.* 6. To be last in entering the synagogue.—*Buxtorf, Lex.*, 1146.

It will throw light on many passages to quote a few more Rabbinical details. A Rabbi, as I have said, was formally made so by the Semicha, or laying on of hands. But the "degree," if I may so say, was conferred not by laying on of hands only. Before Hillel's day, if one accredited Rabbi said to another, "I create thee a Rabbi; a Rabbi be thou," it was sufficient. After Hillel's day, however, no one could confer the degree but the president of the great Sanhedrim and the "Father of the House of Judgment," in the presence of two witnesses. Further, it could on no account be done outside the land of Israel. A degree could be conferred on an absent person, however, and sent abroad to him. Any number of degrees could be conferred at the same time—that is, any number of Rabbis created. The powers conferred by the title were various, and a Rabbi might be authorized to execute some and not others, or his powers might be given only for a time. He might be appointed a judge, but not to teach respecting things allowed and forbidden; or he might be authorized to teach respecting these, and not to judge in money causes; or he might be authorized to judge money causes and not criminal. A Rabbi did not, however, get his title till he who nominated him was dead. Till then he was a Haber, or "companion," or "disciple," or "friend." He was also called "a disciple of the wise," and was felt worthy to be a Rabbi, though it was thought indecorous to claim equal honour with his nominator by assuming the title. A new Rabbi—that is, a disciple—either sat on the ground while his patron taught, or stood.

These facts are taken from various passages of the Talmud, &c., as quoted by Buxtorf, 1498, 1499.

[h] That is, the James who is called the brother of Jesus; thought by many to have been the same as James the son of Alphæus—that is, His cousin.

[i] The phrase, "Go ye and learn," was the usual form of expression among the Rabbis.—*Nork*, 59.

[k] Mercy. חֶסֶד (Hesed) kindness, love, zeal for the good of any one. The passage is strictly parallel to that in Micah vi. 8, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" It is noteworthy that Hosea (B.C. 780) and Micah (B.C. 720) were among the very earliest of the prophets. So long had the noblest practical religion been taught in Israel.

[l] The Greek imperfect of "habit" is used (Luke v. 33).—*Winer's Grammatik*, 327.

[m] Ewald assumes that the zeal of the disciples of John had roused the Pharisees to greater activity than usual.—*Geschichte*, v. 379.

[n] "He who makes prayer a daily mechanical task work, his prayer is no prayer."—*Berachoth*, 4. 4. "Few words are to be used in prayer before God."—*Berachoth Bab.*, 61 a.

[o] Old bottles are frequently patched and mended with skin and pitch. The manufacture of these skin bottles is very simple. The animal is skinned from the neck by simply cutting off the head and legs and then drawing the skin back, without making any slit in the belly. The skin in this state, with the hair on, is then steeped in tannin, and

filled with a decoction of bark for a few weeks. . . . They are then sewn up at the neck, the sutures being carefully pitched. They are then exposed to the sun, on the ground, for a few days, covered with a strong decoction of tannin and water pumped on them from time to time, to keep them on the stretch till sufficiently saturated. Dry bottles crack. The hair on the skins preserves them from friction in travelling. . . An old skin is not able to bear the distention of new wine in the process of fermentation, and would burst with it.—*Tristram's Nat. Hist. of Bible*, 93, 412. I have throughout adopted the correct text, which varies a little from our version, though not so as at all to change its general meaning.

---

## CHAPTER XXXV.

[a] Meyer, in a striking passage (Matt. viii. 19) shows that the Rabbis must have understood Daniel's phrase—"the Son of Man"—as used by Jesus, of His claim to be the Messiah.

[b] Winer thinks the name Zebedee comes from the district Zebedani, between Baalbek and Damascus (ii. 711). Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* notices that Zabdai is nearly identical in meaning with John, as if the father had given his son a name more in favour than his own, and yet of the same import.

[c] Hausrath, in *Art.* "Apostel," in *Bibel Lex.*, thinks them the sons of the same Alphæus, who is also known in the Gospels as Cleophas, the husband of Mary—apparently the sister of our Lord's mother.—John xix. 25. Matt. xxvii. 56. Mark xv. 40.

[d] Ewald thinks that John, and of course his brother James, were related to the priestly race, through his mother. He supposes both her and Mary, the mother of Jesus, to have been of the tribe of Levi, and quotes the tradition in Eusebius that John, in his old age, wore the πέταλον (petalon), or priestly coronet.—*Geschichte*, v. 246. The petalon was a gold plate fastened on the brow of the high priest with a purple-blue cord. It bore the words in Hebrew, "Holy to Jehovah." Ewald thinks that its use was open to all Levites.—*Alt.* 395. *Hofmann*, 30. The sacerdotal tendencies of the post-apostolic age may have invented this, as it did many other traditions. Huther (*Jacobus*, 14) treats it as of no value.

[e] "Fishermen with the casting net" (the net used by Peter at the time of the miraculous draught), at the present day work stark naked, with the exception of a thick woollen skull-cap. "On the Egyptian monuments, all persons catching fish and water-fowl *with nets* are depicted naked. The custom, therefore, appears to be ancient and widespread."—*Tristram's Nat. History of Bible*, 290.

Dr. Tristram questions whether they could have been quite naked in the "more civilized days" of Peter, "with a dense population on the shore." But this admirable and accomplished writer will doubtless remember that at the Greek games introduced by Herod (*Jos. Ant.* xvi. 5. 1), which were very popular with young men, in spite of the Rabbis, the competitors were in many cases quite naked. So that nudity was less regarded, even by many Jews, then, than now, doubtless through the universal presence of more or less Greek feeling.

[f] Simon is called the Canaanite, in Matt. x. 4, and Mark iii. 18, and in Luke vi. 15 Zelotes. The word used by Matthew is Κανανίτης (Cananites), from Heb. קַנָּא (Kanna), Aram. קַנְאָן (Kannān) *zealous*, and of this, Zelotes (ζηλωτής) is a translation. The zealots in later years, possibly even in Christ's day, had become a society like the Italian Carbonari, or the German Fehmgerichte of the middle ages, striking secretly at alleged "enemies of the Law," at the order of their superiors, without trial.

For the Old Testament uses of קַנָּא see Buxtorf, 2050. The zealots took their name, as has been said, from a remembrance of the words of the dying Mattathias, the father of the Maccabæan heroes. "Now hath pride and oppression gotten strength, and it is a time of desolation and bitter fury. Now, therefore, my sons, be ye *zealots* for the Law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers."—1 Mac. ii. 49, 50. The sentiment was lofty, and such as only spirits of a noble devotion and earnestness would grasp. The remembrance of Gideon overcoming Midian in spite of its hosts, with His chosen three hundred, and of the victories against similar odds, recorded so often in the Old Testament, and in the History of the Maccabees, fired them to dare even the awful power of Rome. The battle was the Lord's, not man's, and there was no restraint with Him to save by many or by few. 1 Sam. xiv. 6; 2 Chron. xx. 15. They were at first called Galilæans: Galilee being their favourite ground of action, from the facilities it offered for gathering and keeping together their guerilla bands. The Galilæans were more quick-blooded, moreover, than their southern brethren, and were always brave soldiers. See *Jos. Bell. Jud.* vii. 10. 1. *Ant.* xviii. 1. 6.

Josephus speaks with the bitterness of a renegade of the little bands that rose from time to time, after the example of Judas the Galilæan, in the fond hope that the Messiah would appear, and give them the victory over the stranger. He calls them robbers and traitors. Josephus, no doubt, looked on our Lord and His followers as the leader and dupes of such a band, and classed Him and them in the same category of "traitors," &c., else he would have spoken more of Him.

[g] Mark ix. 19. In the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, and Vatican MSS. the words are, "He answereth unto them" (the disciples) "not answered him"—the father of the child.

[h] Sepp (*Jerusalem u. d. H. Land*, ii. 126) thinks the Sermon on the Mount was delivered somewhere in the Decapolis or Perea. Bunsen decides for Karun Hattin (*Bibelwerk*, ix. 313), while De Wette, Meyer, Robinson, Fritzsche, Keim, and others think the particular hill impossible to identify.

[i] Hofmann gives examples of alphabetical prayers, each petition beginning with the letter after that with which the preceding one commenced!—*Leben Jesu*, &c., 275.

---

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

[a] Luke (vi. 20—49) gives a shorter report of the Sermon on the Mount. I shall notice any variations of importance. The best MSS. show that verses 3 and 4 of St. Matthew, chapter v., should be transposed.—*Herzog*, ii. 183.

[b] It must not be thought that there was no true religion in the world before Jesus, or in the economy He came to supersede. The Law and the Prophets had spoken with no doubtful voice respecting the true conditions of acceptance with God. Even the uncanonical literature of the Jews was often healthy and spiritual in its tone. "If ye subdue your own understanding, and reform your hearts," said the Fourth Book of Esdras (xiv. 34), "ye shall be kept alive, and after death ye shall find mercy." "The angels know," says the Book of Enoch,* "what will happen to the spirits of the humble and of those who mortify their flesh and receive the reward from God, and of those who were evilly used by the wicked; who loved God, not gold or silver, or any of the things of this life, but gave up their body to suffer; and who, through life, did not crave after earthly food, but looked on themselves as a passing breath, and lived accordingly, and were often proved by the Lord, but their spirits were found pure, to praise His name. He has, therefore, given them the reward for this, because they were found to love the eternal heaven more than life, and praised Me even when they were trodden down by evil men, and had to listen to their revilings and blasphemings." The resemblance and the contrast between this and the teaching of Jesus are both significant.

* Dillmann's Buch Henoch last chapter

It is curious to note the abuses which have sprung from words apparently so clear as those of the Beatitudes. The Synod of Cordova (A.D. 850—859) had to pass stern laws against the custom prevalent among the monks of deliberately infuriating the Mahommedans of Spain to obtain martyrdom at their hands.—*Herzog*, xix. 354.

Lightfoot quotes from the Rabbis a striking passage illustrative of the corrupt and corrupting ideas of purity too prevalent among the Pharisees. "Come and see," says R. Simeon Ben Eleazar, "how far the purity of Israel extends itself; when it is not only appointed that a clean man eat not with an unclean woman, but that a Pharisee who has a shameful disease eat not with a common person who has it."—*Horæ Heb.* ii. 99.

[c] "Sixty-five houses in Lady Stanhope's village were rented and filled with salt. These houses have merely earthen floors, and the salt next the ground in a few years is entirely spoiled. I saw large quantities of it literally thrown into the street, to be trodden under foot of men and beasts."—*Land and Book*, 381.

The salt *of this country*, when in contact with the ground, becomes insipid and useless. From the mode in which it is collected, much earth and other impurities are necessarily collected with it.—*Land and Book*, 382.

Maundrell relates that he visited the salt district near Aleppo and broke off a piece of rock-salt which had quite lost i s savour, though further-in the salt was quite strong. The earth, &c., with which the salt was mixed, had caused the outer layer to effloresce and become tasteless.

Josephus records that the salt in Herod's magazines having once become spoiled, he strewed the forecourts of the Temple with it, "that it might be trodden under foot of the people."

Pressel gives much curious information on the subject.—*Herzog*, xiii. 345.

[d] "*Jot or tittle.*" The jot, the Greek iota, is the Hebrew letter Yod (י) the smallest in the Hebrew alphabet. The tittle is the κεραια (keraia) lit.—a horn—the least part of any letter or the ornaments added by the Scribes to some of them. Seven letters were thus

decorated, שׁ ע ט נ ז ג ץ. Three small points were added at the head, or heads of each letter, and one of these points was the "tittle."

Many passages occur in the Talmud illustrative of the superstitious reverence, among the Rabbis, for even the jots and tittles of the Law. Thus. Once on a time, the Book of Deuteronomy came before God, and, falling prostrate before Him, said, "O Lord of the universe! in me hast Thou written Thy Law. But if a law be altered in any part it is altered in all. Behold, Solomon is attempting to root out Yod." (When he took many wives he was said to have at the same time taken the Yod, which marks the plural, from the verse Deut. xvii. 17, "He shall not multiply wives—נָשִׁים, nashim—to himself.") God, ever blessed, answered; "Solomon and a thousand like him shall perish, but not a tittle" (the fragment of one of the ornaments of the letters) "shall perish."

In the same way, God was said to have taken the Yod which was dropped from the name Sarai when it was changed into Sarah, and put it in the name of Joshua. It had been at the end of the woman's name, but was honoured by being put in front of the man's, when Moses changed the name of Hoshea to Jehoshua, or Joshua—הוֹשֵׁעַ changed into יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. Num. xiii. 8; Ex. xvii. 9. Thus, God, rather than let even the smallest letter of one of the words of the Law be lost, added it to another word. See Gfrörer's *Jahrhundert* i. 235; Meyer's *Matthäus*, 147; Kitto's *Cyclo.* ii. 663; Lightfoot's *Horæ, Heb.* ii. 101, 102; Elsey's *Annotations*, i. 95.

So exact, indeed, were the Rabbis, that to change the letter ח (Cheth) into ה (He) was declared to be "to destroy the world;" and the same undefined ruin is said to be involved in the change of כ (Caph) into ב (Beth) or of ד (Daleth) into ר (Resh).

Incidentally, the words of Christ show that the present square-shaped letters were in use in His day.—*Dillmann, in Herzog*, ii. 145.

The Book of Jubilees (c. 6) tells us that all the Rabbinical laws are copied from the books of heaven, and are from eternity. The whole world, says the Talmud, is not as much worth as one word of the Law.—*Sepp*, iv. 115.

[e] "The Law" included the five Books of Moses. "The Prophets" were divided into a "first" and "last" section, which, however, were joined as a whole. The first part included Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, and Kings; the second part, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the minor prophets. It was a striking illustration of the inferior value set on "The Prophets" that they were never read entirely; only selected lessons were used.—*Bibel Lex. Art.* "Bibel," *by Reuss.*

[f] On each Monday and Thursday three sections of the Law were read in the synagogue; on each feast or fast day, five; on Sabbath morning, seven; on Sabbath afternoon, three; while in the week only one section of the Prophets was read.—*Pressel.*

[g] The local courts could put to death by the sword; the Sanhedrim could put to death by stoning also, but only with permission of the Roman authorities.—*Schürer*, 403, 404; *Elsey*, i. 102.

[h] For the meaning of Raca, see Tholuck's *Bergpredigt.*, 175. Lightfoot, ii. 113.

One of the middle-age Rabbinical books—"Sohar"—has adopted the words of Jesus. It says, "He who calls his neighbour Raca shall be thrust into hell."—*Keim*, ii. 250.

Gehenna is the word here translated "hell-fire." It was originally Gē benē Hinnom, the valley of the sons of Hinnom, under the south walls of Jerusalem. Children were burned alive there to Moloch till the days of King Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. The howlings of the infants and the foul idolatry made it the symbol of hell, and this was strengthened by its being afterwards used as the place where the refuse of the Temple sacrifices was burned up continually in a fire that was never quenched.—*Schürer*, 596; *Lightfoot*, ii. 109; *Furrer*, 53; *Herzog*, iv. 710; *Godwyn*, 143; *Das Buch Henoch*, 329. 151.

[i] Raca often occurs in the Talmud. It is equivalent to a worthless person in a light and frivolous sense.—*Buxtorf*, 2254. "It is a word used by one that despises another with the utmost scorn."—*Lightfoot*, ii. 109.

The Rabbis had many refinements respecting homicide. Thus, "He is a manslayer, whosoever shall strike his neighbour with a stone or iron, or thrust him into the water or fire, whence he cannot come out, so that he die. He is guilty. But if he thrust another into the water or fire, whence he might come out, if he die, he is guiltless."—*Sanhed.* ix. 1; *Horæ Heb.* ii. 110. Again, "Whosoever shall slay his neighbour with his own hand, behold, such a one is to be put to death by the Sanhedrim. But he that hires another by a reward, to kill his neighbour, or who sends his servants and they kill him, or he that thrusts him violently upon a lion or some other beast, and he kill him, is a shedder of blood, and is liable to death *by the hand of God*, but he is not to be punished with death by the Sanhedrim."—*Babylonian Gemera in Hor. Heb.* iii. 111.

"Fool" (μωρός) mōros—is an expression of contempt for one as wicked and lost. It was equivalent to imprecating damnation on one.—*Hor. Heb.*, ii. 112. Buxtorf (744) quotes

from the Talmud that he who calls his brother a slave is to be excommunicated; he who calls him "a bastard" is to be beaten with forty stripes, and he who calls him "a wicked person" is to be stripped of all he has.—Also *Hor. Heb.* ii. 112.

[k] "Gift" is the word Corban, Mark vii. 11; Matt. xxvii. 6. No interruption of an offering was permitted, especially before the libation after the sacrifice.—*Schöttgen*, 35. Passages somewhat similar to our Lord's are found in the Talmud. Thus, "He that offers an oblation, not restoring what he has unjustly taken away, does not do that which is his duty. The day of expiation atones for what a man has committed against God, but not for what he has done against his neighbour, until he has been reconciled with him." *Hor. Heb.* ii. 113; *Schött.*, 63. But such expressions are rare and had little weight, because with the Rabbis the formal offering covered everything, apart from the state of heart. Indeed, there is no real parallel to the words of Jesus, for the very idea of an interruption in a sacrifice was a horror to the Jew.—*Keim*, ii. 251. Lightfoot notices, moreover that the reference is almost always to pecuniary matters. The idea of reconciliation from a charitable and brotherly heart, or from any other feeling than a formal self-justification before God, is not thought of.

Jesus lays stress on the reconciliation from an humble, loving, penitent heart being made for any offence whatever. Τι—"any whatever."

[l] The Rabbis have somewhat similar expressions, but they are too gross to be copied. To look upon a woman's heel, or her little finger, was denounced as not less guilty than open impurity. But there is the immense difference between Jesus and these purists that while they condemn what is perfectly innocent, attaching guilt even to letting the eyes meet the form of a woman, our Saviour only condemns the looking with evil thoughts. The Rabbis walked with their faces to the earth, lest they should see a woman. Christ speaks with her of Samaria, and has women minister to Him throughout His whole public life. How utterly impure the affected purity which needs to be blind not to offend, and makes nothing of the eye of the mind, if only the outward sight be clean! An extract may be of use. "Rabbi Gedal and R. Johanan were wont to sit where the women bathed naked, and, when spoken to, R. Johanan replied, 'I am the seed of Joseph, over whom evil passions have no power.'"—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 118; *Buxtorf*, 1475; also, 113.

[m] Deut. xxiv. 1. See *Hor. Heb.* ii. 122; Keim, ii. 253.

[n] Jesus does not prohibit an oath under all circumstances, for He Himself did not shrink from the most solemn public oath (Matt. xxvi. 63). The oaths He condemns are the light and thoughtless words of the streets and the markets, or of ordinary life. The early Waldenses, like the Friends of this day, would take no oaths, resting their objection on the words of Jesus in this place.—*Herzog*, xviii. 508.

To swear by heaven as equivalent to swearing by God, whose name they dared not use, was very common.—*Buxtorf*, 2441.

[o] It was the same in ancient Rome. For personal injury or damage to property, the injured person could, in lighter cases, demand an indefinite compensation; if, however, a member of the body were lost, the maimed person could demand an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.—*Mommsen's Röm.* i. 153.

[p] The zuz, in the Talmud, is the sixth part of a denarius, which was nominally equal to 7½d. of our money, but from the different value of money then may have been worth forty pence of our coin.

One hundred zuzees would thus be actually worth nearly £3.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 117; *Tischendorf*, xlvi.

[q] Buxtorf quotes a Rabbinical proverb. "If your comrade call you an ass, put an ass's saddle on you;" bear slander or wrongs, lest by more strife there come more trouble. But this is very far from the meekness prompted by love that seeks to win the evil-doer to repentance for his own sake.

[r] "Coat," χιτών (chiton), generally understood of the tunic, or inner garment, worn next the skin, mostly with sleeves, and reaching usually to the knees, rarely to the ankles.—*Dict. of Ant.* "Tunica." Cloak, ἱμάτιον (himation), generally understood of the outer garment, the mantle or pallium, and as different from the χιτων, and worn over it. Dr. Thomson (*Land and Book*, 118) thinks the coat was the *sultah*, an outer jacket, now worn in Palestine.

Lightfoot, however, says that the chiton was the tallith, quoting the Talmud in proof. In this upper garment, or cloak, were woven the sacred fringes which were to put the wearer in mind of the Law. It was thus a dishonour as well as loss to take this.

"Press thee." The word is ἀγγαρεύω (angareuō). It is a Persian word derived from the letter furnished by authority, which empowers the holder to press into his service persons, conveyances, and beasts, for a journey, &c. The word is translated "compel" in Mark xv. 21. See Buxtorf, 132.

Chardin, in his travels, gives a different etymology of the word. He says it comes from *hangar*, "a dagger" worn by Persian couriers as a mark of authority.—ii. 242.

Where bodily hurt was done, the Rabbis had established five different fines. For *maiming*, if the person were maimed; for *pain*, for the *cure*, for the *reproach* brought on the sufferer by the indignity, and for *the time lost* during convalescence.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 132

---

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

[a] Baur has a splendid essay on the preparation of the world, Jewish and Heathen, for Christ, in the beginning of his *Geschichte d. Christlichen Kirche*.

[b] Some have been disposed to ascribe the special teaching of Jesus to the lessons of the Rabbis, but if the proofs I have already given be not enough, let me quote the words of a man of genius than whom no one was more entitled to speak, by his very antagonism to much that is accepted by the Christian world at large—Dr. Ferdinand Christian Baur. "If one considers the development of Christianity," says he, "its whole historical significance hangs only on the character of its founder. How soon would all that Christianity has taught of true and impressive, have been relegated to the roll of long-forgotten sayings of the noble friends of man, and the thoughtful minds of antiquity, if its doctrines had not become words of eternal life in the mouth of its founder?"—*Geschichte*, 36. Hermann Weiss (*Sündlosigkeit Jesu*, Herzog, xxi. 205) well says, that "the attempt to invalidate the divine originality and perfection of Christ and of Christianity, by quoting Jewish or Heathen moral utterances as already containing the essence of the doctrine of Jesus, has now fairly died out." It would be strange indeed, if in the interminable dust-heaps of the Talmud, of which the Babylonian alone, including the Rabbinical commentaries on it, fill twenty-four volumes folio (Vienna, 1682) did not contain some stray pearls. Among the many Rabbis of successive centuries, whose sayings are reported in it, or whose expositions are appended to it, there was here and there a man of genius, or of pure and lofty aspirations who has left traces of his finer or more religious nature in sayings well worthy preservation. Such is the sentence, "Number thyself among the oppressed; not among the oppressors: hear reproach and answer not again: do all from love to God, and rejoice in tribulation."—*Sabbat.* lxxxviii. 6. *Hess, Röm. u. Jerus* 137. This also is fine—"The Thora (Law) has grown to be a wide sea, but it will some day shrink into this one command—"Walk before God and be holy."—*Herzog*, xii. 487. But glimpses of profound metaphysics, stray parables of real beauty, and occasional sentiments of true spiritual breadth and elevation are only the rare grains of wheat in mountains of chaff. There has been of late a tendency to exalt the Talmud at the expense of the New Testament, but let any one take up a translation of any part of it, or even turn to the illustrations of different laws I have drawn from it (chap. xvii.), and the exaggeration of such an estimate will at once be seen. The Talmud is divided into six great sections, and of these, the first—The Seder Seraim (Laws of seeds)—take up one folio; the second, The Laws of the Feasts, three folios; The Laws of Women, two folios; The Laws of Inquiries, three folios; The Laws of Consecrations (treating of sacrifices), two folios; and the Seder Taharoth, or Purifications, one folio. Each Seder is divided into a greater or less number of Massichthoth or treatises; these again into Perakim or chapters, and every chapter into more or fewer Mischnaioth or "Teachings"—the so-called "Traditions of the Elders" mentioned in the New Testament. In all, there are seventy treatises, in 525 chapters and 4,187 sections, or "Traditions of the Elders." The contents of one treatise may be given as a sample of the whole. Let it be the fourth of the Seder Taharoth. It treats of the "water of sprinkling," and is called "The Cow." The water was made of the ashes of a red cow and flowing water, and was used for the purification of men and things that had been defiled by the presence of a dead body. The contents are divided into twelve chapters. Of these, the 1st, which is divided into four "Teachings" or sections, treats of the age of the red cow, of that of the young cow, in Deut. 21, and of that of other animals for sacrifice. The 2nd in four sections. How to decide if they are fit or unfit. The 3rd, in eleven sections. Of the separation of the priest who is to kill the red cow; of the leading it outside the camp (or city), the slaughtering, and the burning it, and of the gathering up of its ashes. The 4th in four sections. Possible ways in which victims may be made unfit. The 5th in nine sections. Of the vessels to be used for the water of sprinkling. The 6th in five sections. Of the cases in which the ashes or the water mixed with them are unfit. The 7th in twelve sections. How the act (of preparing the water of sprinkling) must not be interrupted. The 8th in eleven sections. Of the keeping of the water of sprinkling; of sea-water and other kinds of water in relation to the water of sprinkling. The 9th in nine sections. Continuation of the same. The 10th in six sections. How clean men and vessels may become unclean (in connection with the sprinkling). The 11th in nine sections. Of the hyssop to be used in sprinkling. The 12th in eleven sections. Of the persons who may be sprinkled.—*Pressel, Thalmud, Herzog*, xv. 637.

Dr. Lightfoot's opinion of the Talmud, was that of a man fitted beyond most by a life-long study of it, and by his candour and integrity. He thus expresses it:—"The almost unconquerable difficulty of the style, the frightful roughness of the language, and the amazing emptiness and sophistry of the matters handled, do torture, vex, and tire beyond measure, him who reads these volumes. They everywhere abound in trifles in that manner, as though they had no mind to be read; with obscurities and difficulties, as though they had no mind to be understood; so that the reader has need of patience all along, to enable him to bear both trifling in sense and roughness in expression."—*Ded. of Hor. Heb. on Matthew.*

[c] Aurelius and Trajan were Spaniards, and Hadrian was of Spanish descent. Severus was an African. Seneca and Martial were Spaniards.

[d] Authorities on this whole subject—Hausrath, i. 353—357. Meyer's *Matthäus*, 158. Hess. *Rom.* 137. Keim, ii. 61, 97, 257. *Bibel. Lex.* iv. 168; v. 32. Herzog, xxi. 206, 652. Derenbourg, 220. 138. Keim's *Christus*, 89. *Hillel und Jesus*, 29. *Ecce Homo*, chap. xii. Elsey, i. 115, &c. &c.

[e] There is a fine sentence—a pearl in the vast dust-heaps of the Talmud—"The Thora (Law), has become a great sea, but it will be brought back some day to this one point—walk before God and be holy."—"Rabbinismus" *by Pressel, Herzog*, xii. 487.

[f] The word used in the Hebrew version of Matthew was, doubtless, צְדָקָה—Tsedakah, righteousness.

[g] So in the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS.

[h] The names of large givers to the poor were called out in the synagogues.—*Sepp*, ii. 350.

[i] The corruption of the day had forgotten the merit attached to secrecy even by the Rabbis. Godly Jews were not wanting who dropped their alms into the famed "treasury of the silent" in the Temple, and a Rabbi had taught that "He that doeth his alms in secret is greater than Moses himself."—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 141. R. Jannæus, seeing some one give alms publicly, said to him, "It would have been better for you if you had not given them."—*Buxtorf*, 1891. Another proverb was—"Charity is the salt of riches."

[k] Lightfoot gives illustrations of the "babbling" of Roman prayers. Thus—Antoninus the pious, the gods keep thee. Antoninus the merciful, the gods keep thee. Antoninus the merciful, the gods keep thee, and so on.

It will be remembered that the priests of Baal "called on the name of Baal from morning to noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" Some phrases are repeated thirty times in Mahommedan prayers.—*Land and Book*, 26. 1 Kings xviii. 26. "La illalu illah allah, was repeated over and over."—*Sepp*, ii. 328. The Ephesians (Acts xix. 34) repeated "Great is Diana," for two hours. The repetition condemned was "deorum aures contundere" *to stun the ears of the gods*, as if they could not or would not hear, "nisi idem dictum sit centies," unless the same thing were repeated a hundred times. The Hindoos repeat the name of Ram, over and over thousands of times. In Rome, no priest or magistrate could pray for the people except in the very words of prescribed forms. Some one always stood by to watch that no word was omitted or added, and that there was no interruption, that the prayer might not lose its effect. Among the Jews, the exact time for each prayer was rigidly fixed.—*Schürer*, 505. *Sepp*, ii. 328.

[l] It is always pleasant to note parallels between the words of Jesus and those of the Rabbis, though it is impossible to say how far the latter are original. There was no *written* collection of Rabbinical literature for at least 500 years after Christ. Indeed, it was thought a religious offence to commit any examples to writing. Moreover, the earliest attempt to gather any body of tradition together, to be committed to memory, dates only from the time of Jehudah the Holy, who died about A.D. 220. *Jost*, ii. 120. It is therefore impossible to tell how much in the Rabbis that harmonizes more or less with the sayings of Jesus may not have been borrowed from Christian sources. Yet, with the Law and the Prophets, why should not gracious souls, here and there, have expressed themselves graciously? Gfrörer, who took special pains to search for the Lord's Prayer in the Talmud, found that it could not be traced in any measure to older Jewish sources. Parallels may be found to detached phrases, but one need only look at the illustrations in Lightfoot, to see how entirely independent our Lord's utterance was of anything afloat in the minds of the nation.

The following are the closest analogies in Rabbinical expressions to those of the Lord's Prayer:—"The necessities of Thy people Israel are many; may it be Thy holy pleasure to give each what is needed for his support."—*Bab. Berach*, f. 29. 2.

"For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon my sin. Forgive all my sin."—*Targ. Ps.* xxv. 11.

The day of expiation does not bring forgiveness unless thou makest peace with thy neighbour.—*Joma*, f. 85. 2.

Rabbi Judah was wont to pray, "May it be Thy holy pleasure to deliver us from the froward and from frowardness, from the evil man, from the evil companion, from the evil neighbour, from Satan the destroyer, from the hard judge and from the hard adversary."—*Berac.* f. 16. 2.

"Our Father who art in heaven, deal so with us as Thou hast promised by the prophets."

One of the synagogue prayers, of uncertain age, however, begins, "May Thy great name be magnified and sanctified in the world, and may He make His kingdom reign.

"The wants of Thy people Israel are great and their knowledge small, so that they know not how to disclose their necessities; let it be Thy good pleasure to give to every man what sufficeth for good. He who made the day prepares also the food that man needs for it.—*Keim*, ii. 278. *Nork*, 43. *Lightfoot*, ii. 150. *Sepp*, iii. 203. *Dukes*, 68. *Jüd. Handwerk. Leben*, 22.

[m] The doxology in Luke, and in Matthew is wanting in the early Fathers and chief MSS.

[n] In 1 Chron. ii. 24, iv. 5, there is a name Ashur; presumably, as Buxtorf thinks, of one who had made his face black and haggard by extreme fasting (234). Chronicles belong to the post-exile period. The care of the hair and beard was a matter of great importance amongst the Jews. Not to dress and anoint them was the sign of the extremest sorrow.—*Herzog*, xiii. 321, xvi. 321.

[o] Monebazus, the friend of Izates, Prince of Adiabene on the Tigris, a convert, with his prince, to Judaism, about the time of the death of Christ, figures largely in the Talmud. After wild exaggeration of his wealth, the narrative goes on to say that his brothers and friends came to him and said, "Thy fathers gathered treasures and added to the treasures of their fathers, but thou scatterest them." He answered them, "My fathers had their treasures below (that is, says the Jerus. Talmud, in the earth); I, above (that is, in heaven); my fathers had their treasures where the hands (of men) may lay hold of them, I, where no hand can do so. My fathers treasures that yield no fruit, but I collect what gives fruit. My fathers stored away mammon, I, treasures of the soul; my fathers did it for others, I, for myself. My fathers gathered them for the world, I, for the world to come."—*Buxtorf*, 1224.

For a fine account of Izates and Monebazus and of Queen Helena, mother of Izates, see Renan's *Apôtres*, 256 ff.

The Rabbis held the very commendable opinion, though they were far from always carrying it out, that to marry for money was sure to bring the displeasure of God on a family.—*Buxtorf*, 148.

[p] Buxtorf, *Lex. Thal.* 1217 מָמוֹן (Mamon). Wealth—riches. The Greek and Latin have "mammon." The Talmud says well, "The salt of riches (mammon) is alms-giving."

Mammon was a Syrian idol—the God of Riches—like the Greek Plutus.—*Vaihinger, in Herzog*, viii. 775. The love of money is thus personified in the text.

Milton says of Mammon:—

> "The least erected spirit that fell
> From heaven; for even in heaven his looks and thoughts
> Were always downwards bent, admiring more
> The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
> Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
> In vision beatific."—*Paradise Lost*, i. 678.

[q] In the Talmud we find the following:—"Hast thou seen a bird, or a beast of the wood that got its living by toil? God feeds it with its labour, and yet it is made only to serve man. Does it then become man, who knows his higher calling—to serve God—to be the only creature who cares for his bodily wants?"—*Kiddusch.* iv. 14.

[r] Dry weeds and grass are used in Palestine as fuel.—*Land and Book*, 341.

[s] He who has what he needs for to-day, and says, "What shall I eat to-morrow?" has not faith. He who creates the day, creates the food for it.—*Talmud, in Buxtorf*, 2017.

[t] This was a Jewish proverb. See Buxtorf 2080, *Hor. Heb.* ii. 158.

[u] "The masterless dogs are countless, as they have been from the earliest times in Eastern towns. They are hateful-looking, yellow beasts, with sharp muzzles. The prophet vividly describes their mode of life by day, as I often noticed it:—'They are dumb, they do not bark, they dream, and lie about and like to sleep.' Isai. lvi. 10. After sunset, however, they are active enough, and swarm through the streets, breaking the quiet of the night with their dissonant noise. At the same time they act like sanitary police. Whatever is unclean, useless, or unholy according to Jewish (or Eastern) ideas, is thrown out on the streets. (The heads and offal of animals, for example.) The dogs come and eat all this up."—*Furrer's Palaestina*, 31.

Every Oriental city and village abounds with troops of hungry and half-savage dogs, which own allegiance to the place rather than to persons, and wander about the streets and fields, howling dismally at night, and devouring even the dead bodies of men when they can reach them. Ps. lix. 14, 15; 1 Kings xxi. 19, 23, 24; Ps. xxii. 16; Phil. iii. 2; Rev. xxii. 15.—*Tristram's Nat. Hist. of Bible*, 79.

Swine and dogs were the ideal of uncleanness. Swine were eaten and even offered in sacrifice by the Canaanites, and though the Jews, themselves, did not keep swine, they were largely kept by others for the heathen market. The population of Galilee, and of the districts beyond Jordan, were largely foreign and heathen, and created a demand for the flesh of swine. The herds, fed on the hills and wastes, seem often to have become half wild, like pigs fed in the Bush in Canada.

[x] An incidental allusion like this shows that bread and fish were the staples of food in Galilee. Near the lake fish was, in fact, *the flesh* used by the community generally.

There is an ancient Greek proverb—to give a scorpion for a perch—which may have been current in Palestine, in our Lord's day.

Scorpions are so common in Palestine, that every stone, however small, must be turned over before a tent is pitched, to guard against their presence.

[y] Philo's words are—ἁ τις παθειν εχθαιρει μὴ ποιεῖν αὐτόν.—*Euseb. Præp. Ev.* viii. 7. 6. The date of Tobit, according to Ewald, is B.C. 333.

[z] The characteristic of these men is an impure, but often zealot-like heroism of faith, which made them capable of outward miracles, but remained without influence on their inner spiritual life, as Paul describes, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Men of the same class are found at all times, especially those of unusual religious excitement.—*Meyer, Matthäus in loc.* See also De Wette *in loc.*

[aa] I have united the parallel passages in Matthew vii. 24—27, and Luke vi. 47—49.

---

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

[a] Wieseler (Herzog, xxi. 546) supports Purim; so, also, do Olshausen, Farrar, and others. Sepp, Andrews, Lightfoot, and many more favour the Passover; Neander and Ewald (v. 370) the Feast of Tabernacles; while Vaihinger thinks he can prove it to have been Pentecost.—*Herzog*, xi. 483. It is useless to trouble the reader with the rival arguments. The article is wanting in the received text, so that, as it stands, the words are "*a* feast of the Jews." Had it been "*the* feast," it would have meant the Passover.—*Winer*, 118. Tischendorf inserted the article in his second edition, but not in his seventh, and yet Davidson has adopted it in his English version of Tischendorf's latest text (New Test., 1875). The Sinaitic MS. has it, and there are many other MSS. in its favour.

Hofmann (*Leben Jesu*, 356) states the reasons for its rejection very forcibly.

[b] The cisterns hewn out in the rock of the Temple Hill, under the courts of the Temple, held ten millions of gallons. One alone would contain 2,000,000 gallons. The sacrifices entailed endless cleansings, to remove the blood, &c., of countless slaughtered animals.—*Recovery of Jerusalem*, 17.

[c] Arnold (*Herzog*, ii. 117) derives Bethesda from the Aram. בֵּית חֶסְדָּא (Beth Hesda)—"The house of mercy." He identifies it apparently wrongly with the Birket Israel, at the north-east angle of the Temple enclosure. That pool is 360 English feet long, 130 broad, and 75 to 80 deep. At the south-west two huge vaults have been found hewn 130 feet down into the rock.

Sepp gives other derivations, iv. 38. See also Ewald, v. 370. The Sinaitic MS. reads Bethzatha, which is very like Bezetha, "the new town" in which the "twin pools" stood. Indeed, it is called Bezetha by Eusebius.—*Winer, R. W. B.*

The altered Sinaitic and the Alexandrian read "in the sheep *market*, a pool." In verse 3 the Sinaitic and the Vatican omit "*great.*" The Sinaitic, Vatican, and later altered Alexandrian omit "waiting for the moving of the water."

The Sinaitic and Vatican omit the fourth verse entirely. In other versions it is marked as doubtful. It seems to have been a gloss or explanation written at first on the margin of some MS., and after a time incorporated by mistake, with the text. The Alexandrian Fathers rejected it, and even so cautious a writer as Sepp regards it as spurious.—ii. 38.

[d] Robinson (i. 341) himself noticed the intermittent character of this fountain. He was informed that it "bubbled up at irregular intervals, sometimes two and three times a day, and, in summer, sometimes once in two or three days."

Captain Wilson, R.E. (*Recovery of Jerusalem*, 25) says, "At intervals the water rises

with some force, and runs through a rock-hewn passage to Siloam. These intermittent flows appear to be dependent on the rainfall. In winter there are from three to five a day; in summer, two; later on in the autumn only one, and, after a failure of the early rains, but once in three or four days." He adds, "The taste of the water is decidedly unpleasant and slightly salt, arising from its having filtered through the mass of rubbish and filth on which the city stands."

I should certainly prefer the "troubling" from the red sediment brought into Bethesda by heavy rains to any possible ebb and flow of its waters.

[e] Curious legends were told of the fabulous spring of Miriam. See Nork, *Rabbinische Quellen*, 172. Hofmann's *Leben Jesu*, 356. In v. 4 ἐν means *into*, as in the English version.—*Winer*, 385.

[f] Palestine abounds in sufferers from rheumatic diseases and palsy. The scanty clothing worn in the heat of the day, and the sleeping by night on the roofs, or in the open air, with little, if any, extra covering, in the frequently cold nights, is perhaps the cause. See *Krankheit*, Herzog, viii. 40.

[g] This explains why those who were not in immediate danger came to Jesus after sunset on Sabbath—that is, when the Sabbath was over.—Mark i. 32.

[h] The German Jews will not carry a walking-stick on Sabbath. To walk on grass is forbidden, as it is a kind of threshing. A handkerchief is a burden if carried in the pocket, but not if it be tied round the waist as a girdle.

[i] πατέρα ἴδιον. His father in a special sense, thus marked with emphasis.

[k] This is Tischendorf's rendering. Ewald makes it the second Sabbath after the one that followed the second day of the Passover. The Sabbaths from the Passover to Pentecost were known as the first, second, &c., the first being counted from the second day of the feast. Lightfoot's explanation is the same.—ii. 194.

[l] A Sabbath day's journey was 2,000 cubits, which were reckoned equal to six stadia. A stadium was 606 feet 6 inches $\times$ 6 = 3,639 feet = 1,213 yards. No distance was spoken of by Moses, but it was commanded that no one should go outside the camp to get manna. The Levitical towns were to have a district of 2,000 cubits in breadth on all sides (Num. xxxv. 5), and there was to be the same distance between the ark and the people of Israel in their march behind it. From this the Rabbis concluded that that was the distance between the Tabernacle and the edge of the camp, out of which no one was to go.—*Winer, Sabbathweg. Bibel. Lex.* v. 125. *Buxtorf*, ii. 582.

[m] *Hor. Heb.* ii. 196. Orientals rise very early, and the morning service was not over till the third hour—nine a.m.

[n] The Jews could not, on the Sabbath, even lift up and eat fruit which had fallen from a tree.—*Lightfoot.*

[o] The punishment for Sabbath-breaking was death by stoning.—Ex. xxxi. 14; xxxv. 2. Num. xv. 32. *Mischna Sanhed.* vii. 8. Jesus was, thus, in imminent peril.

[p] How closely this answer pressed the Rabbis, may be judged by the following extract from the *Jalkut Rubeni*, fol. 127, col. 2:—"Where David found nothing but the shewbread, he said to the priest, 'Give me of this that I may not die of hunger;' for where life is in danger, the strictness of the Sabbath is no longer in force."

[q] It had been a great subject of discussion whether the Passover lamb could be slain on the right day, if that day chanced to fall on a Sabbath. Hillel had carried the lawfulness of slaying it by reminding them that the daily sacrifice was offered on Sabbaths, but especially by quoting in his support the testimony of Schemaia and Abtalion, two famous Rabbis of the preceding generation. That he should have been able to do so not only settled the matter as he argued, but raised him by acclamation to the rank of Nasi, or head of the Sanhedrim.—*Derenbourg*, 178. "There was no Sabbath-rest in the Temple."—*Maimonides in Nork*, 70.

[r] The Herodians were such Jews as favoured Herod Antipas, and thus, outwardly at least, were friends of Rome, whose vassal Antipas was. Antipas had seen Judea and Samaria made a Roman procuratorship, and longed to get them back for himself, as a son of Herod, of whose kingdom they had been part. Intrigues to gain this end led to standing enmity between him and the rest of the family on the one side, and the procurators on the other.—Luke xxiii. 12. Disappointment at the results of annexation to Rome had made some look with kindlier feeling on the Idumean dynasty, which in its turn felt itself endangered by the claims of Jesus to set up a new kingdom. The Herodians in the end, got their wish, when Agrippa I. (A.D. 37) was appointed king, and a Herod kingdom was thus again set up for a time. Even the Pharisaic or national party, indeed, came in the end to favour this scheme, in their deadly hatred of Rome. The alliance with the Herodians against Jesus, was the first step in this new political path.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

[a] Mommsen (*Geschichte*, ii. 79) says, that all the miseries of negro slavery were a drop to the ocean, compared to those of the slaves of antiquity. See, also, Döllinger, *Gentile and Jew*, &c., ii. 230, 231. Eliot's *History of Liberty*, vol. ii. pt. 1, 185, ff. Liddell's *Rome*, 303. Aristotle, *Ethics*, viii. xi. 6 (Sir A. Grant's edition, ii. 273), ranks a slave as a thing, not as a person, and prescribes the same kind of attention. "The instrument" he says, "receives just so much care from its master as will keep it in proper condition for the exercise of its functions."

[b] Elders—πρεσβυτέροι.—Heb. זְקֵנִים—Zekānim. They were the same as the "rulers" "the rulers of the Synagogue." Mark .v 22; Luke vii. 3; Acts xiii. 15. They were also called Parnasim, or shepherds, a title employed of Christian elders, by implication, in Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2. They formed the governing body of the Synagogue, under the "chief ruler of the Synagogue" (Luke viii. 41, 49; xiii. 14), having the care of ecclesiastical order and discipline, including the infliction of civil punishments, such as excommunication (John ix. 22; xii 42; xvi. 2). They also attended to the charities of the Synagogue. They were apparently *ex-officio* members of the local Sanhedrin, which, however, included other members. Thus, they formed—in a nation where Church Law was also Civil Law—the bench of magistrates of the locality.

By some strange slip, Dr. Farrar, in his learned and admirable *Life of Christ*, has confounded the elders of the Synagogue with the "Batlanim," who were a body of ten men paid by the Synagogue to attend every service, that the legal number required for worship might be always present. They were apparently poor men, past work, to whom the duty was a pretext for giving charity.—*Leyrer in Herzog—Synagogen d. Juden*. xv. 313. *Buxtorf*, *Lex*. 291.

[c] Disease was regarded as the result of direct agency of evil spirits. Luke xiii. 11. "A spirit of infirmity." The same idea explains St. Paul's threat of delivering offenders to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. 1 Cor. v. 5. See Winer, *R.W.B. Art.* "Satan." *Bibel Lex*. i. 414. It pervades the whole of the Gospels, as any one may see who examines for himself.

[d] The Talmud says, "Whosoever sees a dead corpse and does not accompany it to its burial, is guilty of that which is said—"He that mocketh the poor, reproacheth his neighbour"—for no man is so poor as the dead.—*Bab. Berach*. fol. 6. 1.

[e] Burial followed almost immediately after death. Mill (*Nablus*, 150) says, that a woman who died at eleven in the forenoon, was buried at three in the afternoon. Even in England the fear of pollution by having a corpse in a house on the Jewish Sabbath, often causes Jews who have died at six on Friday evening, to be buried about half-past seven of the same day. One witness before the London United Synagogue Council, deposed (1876), that he had seen "corpses" move their hands and feet, and that he had seen bodies buried while still warm.—*Daily Telegraph* report, April, 1876.

[f] Keim thinks six months. Ewald (v. 428) over a year.

[g] The Rabbis understood such passages of Isaiah to refer to the times of the Messiah, and hence John would at once perceive the force of Christ's quotation and symbolical acts. The Pesichta Rabbathi, p. 29 c., and Jalkut Schimeoni, i. p. 78 c. say, that "When the Messiah comes, 'The eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.' (Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6.) This, indeed, happened of old, for it is written in Exodus xix. 8: 'And all the people answered and said,' &c., therefore there were no deaf or dumb among them. Again, Exodus xx. 18: 'And all the people saw the lightning.' Hence there were no blind. So, also, Exodus xix. 17: 'Moses led the people out of the camp,' &c. This shows there was no lame person in Israel! Under the Messiah, the tongues of the dumb will sing (Isaiah xxxv. 6). This also happened of old, Exodus xix. 8: 'And all the people answered.'" Jonathan, the student of Gamaliel, gives the passages of Isaiah a spiritual rendering. "Then will the eyes of the House of Israel, which had been blind to the Law, be opened, and their ears, which had been deaf to the words of the prophets, will hear." Elias had not died, and it was therefore expected that he would come to call Israel to repentance—for he was the greatest preacher of repentance under the Old Economy—and that he would then die, as all men must. The belief in his appearance was as wide-spread as that of the Messiah. Jesus pointed to John as the Elias to come; but a spiritual appearance like John's did not satisfy them, and hence, believing that Elias had not come, they concluded, and still believe, that the Messiah, also, is yet future. See Langen, *Judenthum*, 491.

[h] "The reed of Egypt and Palestine is the *Arundo donax*, a very tall cane, growing twelve feet high, with a magnificent panicle of blossom at the top, and so slender and

yielding that it will lie perfectly flat under a gust of wind, and immediately resume its upright position. It grows in great cane brakes in many parts of Palestine, especially on the west side of the Dead Sea, where, nourished by the warm springs, it lines the shore for several miles with an impenetrable fringe—the lair of wild boars and leopards—to the exclusion of all other vegetation. There, it attains a gigantic size. On the banks of the Jordan it occurs in great patches, but is not so lofty.—*Tristram, Nat. Hist. of Bible*, 437.

[j] ὁ δὲ μικρότερος. The comparative. It never stands for the superlative, as it is made to do in the English version. See Winer, 216.

[k] The reappearance of Elijah before the Messiah was a settled article of Rabbinical faith. Thus, in the Mischna, we read, "R. Josua said, I have received the tradition from R. Jochanan Ben Sakkai, and he received it from his teacher in unbroken and direct transmission, as a tradition which Moses received at Sinai, that Elias will come, &c."—*Edujoth*, viii. 7, *quoted by Schürer*, 580.

---

## CHAPTER XL.

[a] It has been thought that this "feast" was the same as the one mentioned in Matt. xxvi. 6. in the house of Simon, the Leper. The name was, however, a very common one, for Josephus mentions about twenty Simons, and there are nine mentioned in the New Testament.—*Trench on the Parables*, 289. It was the same with Jude, for there are nine of that name in the New Testament.—*Robinson's Lex.* The mere similarity of name, therefore, amounts to no more than the occurrence of Smith or Brown with us, on different occasions.

[b] In the room where we were received (at dinner), besides the divan on which we sat, there were seats all round the walls. Many came in and took their place on these side seats, uninvited and unchallenged. They spoke to those at table on business or the news of the day, and our host spoke freely to them.—*Narrative of a Mission to the Jews*, i. 92,

[c] It was not unusual to pay this mark of profound respect to Rabbis.—*Webstein, in loc.*

[d] Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, he on whose ass Jesus rode into Jerusalem—the host at whose house Christ celebrated the Passover—the friendly Samaritans, and many others, are examples.

[e] See page 191. φυλακτήριον—a protection, an amulet. Heb. Totaphoth—bands, fillets—later Heb. Tephillin, from the verb to pray.—*Buxt. Lex.* 1743. On the whole subject of the private life of Jesus with His disciples, see Keim, ii. 280—286, to whom I am largely indebted.

[f] The words, "and of an honeycomb," are wanting in the Alexandrian, Vatican, and Sinaitic MSS.; but they are supported by witnesses like Justin and Athenagoras, who are older than our oldest MSS. In the Talmud the Galilæans are represented as poor—sparing of their wine and milk, mixing their eye-paint with water, and thinking even a wick-end worth saving.—*Raschi on Schabbath*, 78a and 47a.

[g] Delitzsch evidently takes the "seven devils" as a Hebraism for special sinfulness. Evil desires were often figuratively spoken of as demons. Many cases occur in the Talmud. See Nork, 135. Lightfoot, iii. 87. Sepp, iii. 244. But this is common to all languages, for we speak of the "demon of drink," &c., &c.; and yet it is contrary to the whole tenor of the New Testament to understand the "seven devils" as a mere figure of speech. Heller, in Herzog's *Ency. Art.* "Maria Magdalena," supports Delitzsch's opinion, but Dr. Herzog himself, in a note, questions its correctness. Sepp, as might be expected, agrees with Heller; but the great body of scholars reject the idea of Mary having been a "Magdalene." The Talmud derives her special name from "Migdala"—a plaiting or curling of the hair usual with abandoned women, and speaks of Mary Magdalene "the plaiter of women's and of young men's hair," as a married woman who had committed adultery. But there is every reason to believe that this was only done to depreciate her as one of the women who waited on our Lord, against whom no slander is too gross to be retailed by the Rabbis.

[h] This is one of the best attested sayings of Jesus, not in the New Testament.—*Anger's Synopsis*, p. 204, 274, xxxi. See, also, Westcott's *Intro.* 4, 25.

[i] Some of the forms of expression used by Jesus are peculiar to Him, and are not found in the whole range of Jewish literature. Thus, "Amen, amêna, lechôn." "Amen,

amen, I say to you," is His alone so completely that the Apocalypse can speak of Him as "The Amen—the faithful and true witness" (iii. 14). "He who has ears to hear, let him hear," is also His alone. Many sayings of Jesus have no doubt found their way into the Talmud, as those of some one else.

Like the Rabbis, Jesus made His disciples sit round Him (Mark iii. 34) when teaching, so that each might see His face and hear His words.—*Maimonides in Nork*, cxciii. The phrase, "I say unto you," was a form in vogue with the Rabbis. So, also, "It has been said." But while the Rabbis always sought to give weight to what they said by introducing it as the saying of some earlier Rabbi whom they reverendly named Jesus rests on the direct authority of God alone. "I have spoken to you (not in the name of any Rabbi), but in the name of MY FATHER."—John v. 43.

---

## CHAPTER XLI.

[a] The descent of the Messiah from David was a prominent feature in the National Ideal. It was based on passages like Isaiah xi. 1, 10. Jer. xxiii. 5; xxx. 9; xxxiii. 15, 17, 22. Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24. Hosea iii. 5. Amos ix. 11. Micah v. 2. Zech. xii. 7, 8; and was universally acknowledged. Thus, in the Psalms of Solomon, xvii. 5, 23: "Thou, O Lord, hast chosen David to be king over Israel," &c. "Behold, Lord, and raise up to them (Israel) their king, *the Son of David*, at the time which Thou, O God, knowest, to reign over thy child Israel," &c. 4 Esdras xii. 32 (Greek): "This is the Christ who will rise from the seed of David," &c. The Targum of Jonathan also uses the same language frequently. "The Son of David" is, therefore, a very common title for the Messiah. It even occurs in the "daily prayers"—the Schmone Esra. To this day, all Jews in their daily service, public or private, speak of the Messiah they expect as "The Son" or "The Branch" of David, and in the Talmud we read of the Messiah that "the *Son of David* will not come till wickedness has spread over the whole earth."

[b] Kesbeel is changed into Beqa by some kabbalistic art of the Rabbis.

[c] The formula used to drive out the evil spirit which caused epilepsy was—"Thou who art hidden—hidden, thou who art, cursed, crushed, and anathematized be the devil, the son of dung, the son of impurity, the son of filth, like Schamgas, Marigas, and Istemaa."—*Schabb. Babb.* p. 67a.

The Talmud contains copious details respecting magical formulæ, &c. &c.

[d] Beelzebub seems to mean—The Fly God, like Zeus Apomyios of the Greeks, and Myiagrus of the Roman Mythology.—*Gesenii Thesaurus*, 225. Beelzebul, which is the reading in some MSS., is thought by Hilgenfeld to mean the "Lord of the (heavenly, or infernal) habitation"—(The palace royal of the devils). See זְבוּל (Zebūl), in *Gesenii Thesaurus*, 803.

[e] These words of Christ seem to have been a common proverb of the day. The Talmud has them almost exactly. "Every house divided against itself will, in the end, be destroyed and made desolate."—*Buxtorf*, 819.

[f] The phrases, This world and The world to come, were the current ones of the day for the present and future developments of the kingdom of the Messiah. The expectation of a renewing of the heavens and the earth was based on Isaiah lxv. 17; lxvi. 22, and a distinction was made, in consequence, between the present and the future world. In the Talmud the phrase is very frequent. This world and the coming world הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה Ha Olam hazeh. הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא Ha Olam ha ba.

It is very frequent also in the New Testament.—Matt. xii. 32. Mark x. 30. Luke xviii. 30.

It was a question, however, whether the new world would begin at the opening of the Messianic kingdom, or at its close. In the Book of Enoch, xlv. 1—4, we find the former idea; in the 4th Book of Esdras, vii. 30—31, we find the latter. The world to come was more and more understood, however, as the period beginning with the last judgment, at the close of the kingdom of the Messiah.—*Lightfoot*, ii. 207. *Schürer*, 593. *Herzog*, ix. 434. *Gfrörer*, ii. 213. In the mouth of Christ it is equivalent to the eternal world.

[g] Jesus was only one day and two nights dead, but the Jews were accustomed in their common speech to call parts of a day as a whole day, and Jesus was dead part of the first and part of the third day.—*Meyer, in loc.* "It is a common expression among the Greeks to say, 'Such a thing happened three days ago,' when they mean that only a day intervened. They include the two extreme days as if they had been complete."—*Narrative of a Mission to the Jews*, 341, 342.

The phrase "the heart of the earth" does not mean "the grave," but Hades—the "death kingdoms."

Lightfoot (ii. 211) gives many illustrations of parts of a day being spoken of, in popular language, among the Jews, as a day. Jesus, of course, speaks with a recognition of the custom of the people in this respect.

[h] Luther strikingly says that Jesus did with miracles as parents do with pears and apples, which they throw before weary children to tempt them home. On this subject see Weidemann, 93.

[i] Solomon's glory had become in Christ's day the subject of boundless exaggeration. The Book of Wisdom, in the second century before Christ, says of him, "He hath given me certain knowledge of the things that are—to know how the world was made, the beginning, ending, and midst of the times; the turnings of the sun, and the change of the seasons; the circuits of the years, and the position of the stars; the natures of living creatures; the violence of winds and the reasonings of men; the diversities of plants and the virtues of roots, and all things that are either secret or known—them I know." (vii. 17, 21). He had gradually come to be regarded as the prince of magicians, skilled in the secret knowledge which expelled demons, cured diseases by mysterious spells, &c. —*Jos. Ant.*, viii. 2. 5. That Jesus should set Himself above Solomon before a Jewish audience was to set Himself above all men.

[k] The following extracts from Buxtorf respecting the Pharisees are curious:—

פָּרוּשׁ Separatus, abstinens, continens, temperans. Pharisæus, vitæ sanctitate cultu et moribus, ab aliis hominibus separatus.—*R. David Soph*, 1. 8.

*Quidam explicant, esse homines qui ostendunt seipsos separatos (pios) et sanctos, ac vestiunt se veste peregrinâ, diversâ ab aliis hominibus, ut agnoscant eos ex vestibus, quod* Scrip. פרושים, *separati* (id est, qui ab aliis hominibus externâ sanctitate separati) *cum tamen vitæ ipsorum sint malæ.*

Aruch. "P. est qui separat seipsum ab omni immunditia et ab omni cibo immundo, et à populo terræ qui non habet accuratam rationem ciborum."—*Buxtorf*, 1852.

Ne metuas à Pharisæis neque ab illis qui non sunt Pharisæi, sed a pigmentatis, sive tinctis, aut coloratis (id est, hypocritis) qui similes sunt Pharisæis.—*Talmud*, quoted by Buxtorf, 1853.

Pharush—separate, abstinent, chaste, temperate—a Pharisee, separate from men at large by the holiness of his life, religious strictness, and manners.—*Rab. David Soph*, 1, 8.

Some explain them to be men who show themselves to be separated (pious) and holy, and clothe themselves in a strange dress, different from that of other men, that all should know by their dress that they were Pharushim, or separated ones (that is, holy men, separated from others by outward purity), though their lives, notwithstanding, might be bad enough.

*Aruch.* A Pharisee is one who separates himself from every (Levitical) impurity, and from all "unclean" food, and from the Am ha aretz (or common Levitically unclean people), who have not an accurate knowledge of (the Rabbinical laws of) food. (The minute regulations about Terumah, tithes, &c., &c., see page 250, and note o below.)

You need not fear either (real) Pharisees or those who are not Pharisees, but only the sham, painted, dyed, coloured (pretenders)—that is, hypocrites, who are like Pharisees.

[l] The ariston—ἄριστον—the breakfast, originally taken at sunrise; later, the midday meal. Winer thinks the ariston was the breakfast, after synagogue service, and that the dinner was at noon.

[m] The word is ἐβαπτίσθη—1 aor. pass., used for middle. "Baptized," or bathed "himself."

[n] Of course, I have paraphrased the words of Jesus throughout, embodying the hints of De Wette, Meyer, and many others.

[o] The tithing question was one which caused great inconvenience to the people at large, though the Rabbis themselves, whose lives were spent in their schools, had to bear none of the weary annoyance their endless prescriptions laid on others. "The requirement to separate from *all* productions of the soil an undefined gift for the priests (Theruma), and the tithes for the Levites and priests, and every third year a tithe for the poor, caused no little trouble. There were guilds of all who bound themselves to observe the whole Law, and the members of these kept a diligent watch over all such matters to see that they were attended to. These tithes and gifts touched the life of every household, for part of them were *holy*, and the use of *holy things* was a deadly sin. Every purchaser had therefore, to make himself sure, beforehand, whether they had been taken from what he bought or not. This was far from easy, for produce was largely imported from abroad, or was sold by those who were not Jews, and so on, and to pay the tithes and gifts over and over would have been a great loss. A rule was therefore proclaimed, that the assurance of an owner was only to be taken when he could prove his trustworthiness.

In any other case, all produce and preparations from it, such as bread, wine, oil, &c., was to be regarded as doubtful, and one part from the hundred to be taken as Theruma, and then the second tithe, before it could be used. This second tithe could be changed into money, to be spent on food at the feasts in Jerusalem. The first tithe and the tithe for the poor were not, however, to be taken from it, as the case was doubtful, and the Levite or the poor had to prove their claim to it in each instance. The whole question caused, of course, an increase of the price, and made many pious Jews shrink from buying from an uncertificated seller, or from eating with any who were not of the strict guilds. Sellers of produce and food were, hence, also, very anxious to be certificated, which was done on the testimony of three Rabbis, or three members of a guild, that the applicant would have nothing to do with anything that was not duly tithed. He was, henceforward, counted conscientious and reliable, and this trustworthiness was held to extend to all his family and even to his posterity, so long as no suspicion rose against his wife, children, or slaves.

This was the origin of the division of the nation into Haberim—Leaguers—and Am-ha-aretz—common people, not pledged to observe all the details of tithing and priestly gifts.—*Jost*, i. 201—203.

[p] To pass over or touch a grave, or to touch the dead, or even a dead person's bones, was a special defilement. He who was so unfortunate as to be made unclean in this way continued so for seven days, and had to go through a tedious and costly purification. He could not for that time enter his house, or unite in a religious service. To avoid such a calamity, graves were carefully whitewashed when known, but, of course, subterranean tombs might be overlooked.

[q] The different titles used in this incident refer to the same great class. Any one might be a Pharisee, whether a layman, a priest, or a Rabbi, as any of these might be a Sadducee. A Scribe and a lawyer were different names for the same class—the clergy of the day. They were the authorities for the expositions of the Law; they copied the sacred manuscripts, and devoted themselves as the work of their life to Rabbinical studies and employments.—*Godwyn, Aaron and Moses*, 27. *Winer, Bibel Lex.*, &c. &c.

[r] There is no such passage in the Old Testament, so that this, apparently, must have been an earlier utterance of Jesus.

---

## CHAPTER XLII.

[a] The fertility of Palestine makes a return of even one hundred-fold, possible. Tristram says, "I have often counted sixty grains in an ear, and even a hundred is sometimes reached."—*Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, 489.

Keim quotes a case of an Englishman who got seven crops of potatoes in a year a little south of Bethlehem (ii. 448). See also Arnold in Herzog, xi. 24. Any one who wishes to see what the fancy of the Rabbis could invent respecting the fertility of Palestine, may do so in Derenbourg, 111.

[b] In *Succah*, fol. 46. 2, we find the following:—"God's measure is not like the measure of flesh and blood. The measure of flesh and blood is this. An empty vessel is free to receive, but a full one can take in no more. But God's measure is this. The full measure can receive more, but the empty vessel receives nothing, as it is said, 'If hearing thou shalt hear,' that is, 'If thou hearest thou shalt hear, but if thou dost not hear, thou shalt not hear.' The gloss is, 'If thou accustom thyself to hear, then thou shalt hear, and learn, and add." So in *Berachoth*, f. 55. 1, "God doth not give wisdom but to him with whom wisdom is already."

[c] The Common Mustard of Palestine is the same as our own mustard, but grows to a much greater size than in this country, especially in the richer soils of the Jordan valley.—*Tristram*, 473. It is *Sinapis nigra*, of the order Cruciferæ. Thompson (414) has seen mustard plants on the rich plain of Acre as tall as a horse and its rider. Lightfoot (ii. 216) quotes the following from the Rabbis:—"There was a stalk of mustard in Sichin from which sprang out three boughs, of which one broke off, and covered the tent of a potter, and produced three cabs of mustard (nearly six quarts)." R. Simeon Ben Chalaphta said, "A stalk of mustard was in my field, into which I was wont to climb, as men are wont to climb into a fig-tree." These extracts are also given in Buxtorf (823). He adds that an instance is given by the Rabbis, of the fertility of Palestine, to the effect that one man got three hundred-fold increase on the grain he sowed.

[d] Thompson (*Land and Book*, 421) thinks the incident of sowing tares among wheat by design a mere imaginary incident, but Roberts (*Oriental Illustrations*, 521) says that

it is a common practice of a man's enemies, in Judea; and Trench says (*Parables*, 89) that "in Ireland he has known an outgoing tenant, in spite at his ejection, sow wild oats in the fields he was leaving. These, ripening and seeding themselves before the crops in which they were mingled, it became next to impossible to get rid of them."

The Tares (ζιζάνια) are the *Solium temulentum* or Bearded Darnel, a kind of rye-grass. It is the only species of the grass family, the seeds of which are poisonous. They produce nausea, convulsions, and diarrhœa, which frequently end in death. The plant is exactly like wheat till the ear appears. Dean Stanley observed the women and children picking out the tall green stalks, which the Arabs still call Zawân, in the great corn-fields of Samaria, but they are sometimes left till the harvest, and then separated by the fan and sieve.—*Tristram*, 488. The Talmudists made the natural error of supposing darnel "a kind of wheat which is changed in the earth, both as to its form and nature;" but it is a distinct plant.—*Lightfoot*, ii. 215.

"A narrow, steep path, evidently little travelled, led down into the valley. When we were half-way down, it led along the east slope of the hill. What an amazing number of olive and fig-trees on every knoll around, and in the depths of the valley! A brook gurgled briskly down the face of the hill. Over against us a village enlivened the woody landscape. Some peasants were at work on the ground on the terraces, under the shade of the trees. A turn of the road soon brought the village of Dscheba before us. On the steep hill-side the houses rose in terraces one over the other, so that the roofs of one street seemed as if they were the street of that above it. We went over to it, crossing the broad, flat valley. Grain fields covered the whole surface; but the crops were very unequal; part thick, shrunk, and almost dry; part full, and stately. Men, women, and children were busy in many of the fields pulling out the weeds, which they gathered in heaps and bound into bundles, to burn them."—*Furrer's Wanderungen*, 255. See also Buxtorf, 681.

[e] The great drag net is that which "gathered of every kind." Some row the boat, some cast out the net, some on shore pull the rope with all their strength, others throw stones and beat the waters at the ends of the net, to frighten the fish from escaping there. When it is drawn to the shore, the fishermen sit down and gather the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. I have watched this operation a hundred times along the shore of the Mediterranean.—*Thomson*, 402.

The word used is Sagēnē—σαγήνη—a drag net, a *seine*. Can this word come from the same root in spite of its having also a Saxon equivalent?

The Sagēnē was leaded and buoyed, and then drawn in a circle, so as to enclose a great multitude of fishes.—*Tristram*, 289.

[f] Palestine had been so wasted by war, age after age, that treasures hidden in the groud by their owners, at the approach of danger, must have been often found. In India, during the mutiny, treasures were hidden in the strangest places. At Lucknow, a tank was dug and a vault constructed below it, into which the treasures were put, and the water was then let in, over it. A box of magnificent jewels was hidden in a hole at the top of a palm-tree. Immense hoards were built into walls, or buried in fields and sown over with thick crops.

Furrer, *Wanderungen* (73). "There is a piece of good road near the Jaffa gate at Jerusalem, which owes its existence, as I have been most credibly informed, to the belief, that a great treasure had been buried in this part, and to obtain this, the Greeks made a pretence of wishing to form a road. This very speculative looking undertaking has more reason in it in the East than with us. The oppressions and robberies of government often lead the natives to bury their treasures secretly. As in Christ's time, it is nothing unusual to find a treasure hid in a field."

[g] A passage in *Sohar Chadash*, fol. 61, col. 1, illustrates Jewish ways in this particular very strikingly. R. Bun, was once accosted, when travelling, by a young man who had given himself to the study of the Law—"Master, will you let me follow you on your way, and put myself at your service?" The R. answered, "You may," and so the scholar of the Law went after him. As they went on in this way, R. Chija, son of Abba, and R. Juda, son of Joses, met them, and asked R. Bun, "Have you no companion?" R. Bun answered, "I have accepted a young man for my companion." But R. Chija replied, "It is a sin for which you have to answer, that you have not him at your side, that you could discuss respecting the Law with him. When the company had sat down to rest under the shade of a tree, R. Chija commenced as follows, on the words (Prov. iv. 18), "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shines brighter and brighter to the perfect day:"—"If any one has to travel, let him take care that he join himself as companion to some one wise in the Law. The just, who walk in the light, act thus, for they have the light, *i.e.*, the Law, ever before them. The words 'even to the perfect day' mean, till the Shechina joins them, for we know, through the traditions, that wherever the Law is the subject of conversation the Shechina is also there, for it is written (Exod. xx. 24), 'In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and will bless thee.'"

[b] Neander's Commentary on the words is beautiful. "Let those who are themselves dead, who know nothing of the higher interests of the kingdom of God or the divine life, attend to the lifeless clay. But thou, upon whom the divine life, which conquers all death, is opened, *thou* must devote thyself wholly to propagate it by preaching the Gospel. It is for the dead to care for the dead; the living for the living."—*Life of Christ*, 341.

[i] προσκεφάλαιον, pillow for the head. "A part of the boat was used for the boatman's lying or sitting on, and was provided with a (coarse) leather cushion" (of some kind).—*Meyer, Markus*, 61.

[k] Matthew uses the word σεισμὸς (seismos), which is usually the term for an earthquake. It means here a commotion—a storm. Mark and Luke use λαιλαψ (Lailaps), which Passow *(Handwörterb.)* explains as a storm wind with heavy clouds, rain, and darkness, and as a whirlwind raging from below upwards. Hesychius explains it as a whirlwind with rain.

[l] γαλήνη (galēnē). Peace in the air and on the waters (Passow). By some, from γελάω—to laugh. By others, from γάλα (gala), milk—of the milky smoothness of the untroubled sea. The wind ceased (ἐκόπασεν ekopasen)—from κοπάζω kopadzo—when one ceases from weariness (Passow). "Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft."

Winer *(Grammatik*, 295*)*, remarks that the address to the winds and sea is equivalent to Peace (and remain) still!

[m] Gadara is from the same root as "Cadiz" (Gadium). In Hebrew and Phenician it is from the root Gadēr—a walled place.—*Gesenii Thesaurus.* Gadara was a famous fortified city on the east of the Jordan, on the steep edge of the valley of the Jarmuk. It was one of the cities of the Decapolis (league of ten cities), and was about 8 miles south-east from Tiberias, across the Lake (60 stadia), a stadium being 606 feet 9 inches. It was reckoned the capital of Perea, and had coins of its own. The great roads from Tiberias and Scythopolis passed through it to the interior of Perea and to Damascus. It was destroyed by Alexander Jannæus, after a ten months' siege, but had been rebuilt by Pompey, two generations before Christ. It had belonged to Herod the Great's kingdom, but after his death was taken from Archelaus, and joined to the Province of Syria. It was stormed and burned to the ground a generation later, in the great Jewish war, by Vespasian, its youth all slain, and its other inhabitants carried off as slaves. The population must thus have been largely Jewish.—*Jos. Bell Jud.*, iii. 7. 1; iv. 7. 3.

[n] Some of these tombs are now used as houses by the Arabs. "We arrived before sunset at Um Keis—the ancient Gadara. We were very kindly received by the sheikh of the natives who inhabit the sepulchres. The tomb we lodged in was capable of containing between twenty and thirty people. It was of an oblong form, and the cattle, &c., occupied one end, while the proprietor and his family lodged in another. The sepulchres, which are all underground, are hewn out of the live rock, and the doors, which are very massy, are cut out of immense blocks of stone. Some of these are now standing and actually working on their hinges, and used by the natives. Of course, the hinge is nothing but a part of the stone left projecting at each end, and let into a socket cut in the rock. The faces of the doors were cut in the shape of panels."—*Irby and Mangles' Travels*, 297, 298.

There is still a population of about 200 souls in these tombs.

[o] The present name of Gadara is Um Kēs—the Mother of Cunning. There is confusion about the reading of the text in the different MSS., but it is not worth while troubling the reader with it. Um Kēs is the supposed scene of Christ's visit. See *Bibel Lex.*, Keim, Winer, Hausrath, Herzog, Smith's *Dict.*, *Art.* "Gadara." Thomson (*Land and Book*), however, thinks Khersa, opposite Tiberias, the place (376). So Ewald, v. 416. So, also Fürrer, *D. Bedeutung d. Bib. Geog.* 19.

[p] Robinson saw madmen sitting before the walls of Jerusalem, clanking their chains.

[q] ἄβυσσος—abyssos, *lit.* without bottom. It is used here, and in Rom. x. 7, without distinct definition of its meaning. Elsewhere it is found only in the Apocalypse, where it is used seven times of the penal dwelling of evil angels.

[r] Iáeiros (Ἰάειρος), "whom God enlightens." Lightfoot quotes from the Talmud—"The ruler of the synagogue is he by whose command the affairs of the synagogue are appointed; namely, who shall read the Prophets, who shall recite the phylacteries, who shall pass before the ark."—Vol. ii. 171.

[s] Even a poor Israelite was required to have not fewer than two flute-players, and one mourning woman, at the death of his wife; but if he be rich, all things are to be done according to his quality. *Talmud, quoted in Buxtorf*, 766. See also *Horæ Heb.*, ii. 172. Nork, 61. Godwyn, 244.

[t] The Sappedans, or public mourners, among the Jews, were either men or women. Some are specially mentioned in the Talmud for the beauty of their spoken lamentations. The humbler artists among them expressed their grief by sighs and ejaculations, with the repetition of commonplaces of tenderness and regret, but others lamented in songs and poetical elegies. Thus Bar Abbin began his lament thus—"Weep, in your sorrow, but not for the dead, for he has departed into peace; weep for us who remain in tears and sadness."—*Buxtorf*, 1522-5.

Dukes gives a great many examples in his *Rabbinische Blumenlese*, 246—263. He traces the rise of the custom of elegies to that of David over Jonathan.

[u] Death is spoken of hundreds of times in the Talmud as sleep. "When N. slept," that is, when he died, recurs constantly.—*Lightfoot*, ii. 175. So also in Old Testament—Ps. xiii. 4. Job iii. 13. Jer. li. 39. Dan. xii. 2.

[x] It will be noticed that Jesus uses the form of words in vogue at the time from physicians to the sick. See below.

[y] A glimpse at Jewish medical practice is supplied by the following from *Sabbath.*, f. 4. 2. It refers to the use of amulets as means of cure, &c. "It is permitted (even on the Sabbath) to go out with the egg of a grasshopper, or the tooth of a fox, or the nail of one who has been hanged, as medical remedies."

[z] τό κράσπεδον—(kraspedon).

---

## CHAPTER XLIII.

[a] I am indebted for the following paragraphs to *Ein Tag in Capernaum*, by Dr. Delitzsch, 68, 69.

[b] This is the text of the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. St. Luke quotes it freely from the Septuagint. It is from Isaiah lx. 1, 2.

[c] The houses stand on the under part of the slope of the west hill, which rises high and steep above them.—*Robinson*, iii. 419.

The rock is 40 or 50 feet perpendicular near the Maronite church.—*Robinson*, iii. 423. See also *Land and Book*, 431.

[d] Discipulus—a disciple, is "one who is learning"—a scholar. μαθητής—the Greek word for disciple—also means a scholar. Talmid—תַּלְמִיד, the Hebrew word for disciple, means also the same. "The scholars of the wise" was the phrase for the "disciples" of the Rabbis. The Arabic and Hebrew words are the same.

[e] The word "apostle" ἀπόστολος—one sent forth, is the equivalent of the Talmudic שָׁלִיחַ (Sheliach). It carries with it the idea of representation of the authority by which the "apostle" is sent. "The 'Sheliach' of a man is as if he himself who sends were there."—*Buxtorf*, 2411. *Lightfoot*, ii. 176. *Nork*, 61.

[f] "At the sprinkling of the blood the work of the priest began: the slaying of the victims may be done by any one."—*Talmud. Hor. Heb.*, iii. 139. Hence only the very poor killed their own sacrifices.

[g] In accordance with the Mosaic doctrine of temporal rewards and punishments, the Jews looked on all striking calamities, and congenital diseases or afflictions, and visitations like demon possession, as punishment for the sins of parents, or for sins committed by the sufferers themselves in a previous state of existence.—*Schneckenburger*, 249.

[h] Barren fig-trees are still common. Trees, neglected when young, are often so. To bear fruit well, a fig-tree needs to be manured freely, and ploughed and dug about frequently. Even the stones in the orchard are carefully gathered and removed.—*Land and Book*, 350.

"They lay dung to moisten the earth; they dig about the roots of the trees; they pluck up the suckers; they take off the (dead) leaves; they sprinkle ashes, and they smoke under the trees, to kill worms."—*Talmud, Hor. Heb.*, iii. 146.

[i] The Law (Deut. xx. 19, 20) forbade the cutting down fruit-trees, except in special circumstances. Hence the Rabbis said, "Cut not down the palm-tree that bears a cab (two quarts) of dates, or the olive, that bears but the fourth part of a cab (a pint)."

"My son," said one Rabbi, "had not died had he not cut down a fig-tree before its time."—*Hor. Heb.*, iii. 139.

[k] In *Pirke Aboth.*, c. 2. 15, there is a passage strikingly parallel. R. Tarphi said,

"Short is the day, the work is great, the labourers idle, the reward great, and the Lord of the harvest presses."

[l] This seems a better sense of the words than their usual explanation of giving "without return"—that is, without payment. The disciples were to take their lodging, &c. as a free gift for their spiritual labours, and so did the Rabbis. Many passages, however, show how strictly receipt of payment for religious teaching was forbidden. "Make the Sabbath your working day rather than ask anything from the people," says the Talmud. b. *Pesachim*, 112 a. "Work to your uttermost rather than ask from the people," says another passage. (b. *Bathra*, 110 a). So Paul did (Ephes. iv. 28), though he claimed support as a right. 1 Thess. ii. 9. 2 Thess. iii. 8. But he knew a trade, which the fisher Apostles did not. Deut. iv. 5, where Moses speaks, is explained "As I have taught you without reward, so must you spread my teaching without money, for God gave me the Law without asking a reward, and I follow His example, and expect that you will follow mine."—*Bachoroth*, iv. 6.

[m] The "wallets" or "scrips" now in use, are only the skins of kids stripped off whole, and tanned by a very simple process.—*Thomson*, 345.

"The peasant puts on over his shirt only a white and black striped over-garment of camel or goat's hair. It has no sleeves. He girds in his shirt as the fishermen did in Peter's time, and carries in the leathern belt all the money he has."—*Furrer, Wanderungen*, 27.

The wallet, in the Talmud, is a leather pouch (as above) which shepherds hang about their necks, and in which they put their victuals.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 183.

John had counselled those who had two undercoats to give to him that had none.—Luke iii. 11.

Sandals were made of leather or of rushes, or of the bark of palm-trees. "A shoe," says the Talmud, "was of softer, a sandal of harder leather." Some had wooden soles and leather uppers.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 184.

R. Chija says, "It is not fitting that a scholar of the wise should wear shoes."—*Nork*, 62. Pious Jews usually travelled as Christ's disciples did, with girdle, wallet, &c., and also with a book of the Law slung round their neck.

[n] When a Persian enters an assembly, after having left his shoes without, he makes the usual salutation, "Peace be unto you," which is addressed to the whole assembly, as it were saluting the house.—*Morier's Second Journey*, 142. *Godwyn*, 87.

[o] Great care was taken with imported fruit, lest the dust of a heathen country might be on it, and thus the land of Israel be defiled. It might, in such a case, be dust from a grave! All heathen countries, moreover, were as unclean as a burial-place.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 185.

The dust of a heathen country defiled the Jew of Palestine.—*Nork*, 63.

[p] See Jost's translation of the *Mischna Sota*, ix., in which the Rabbis used language almost identical with that of Jesus in this passage—of the signs of the approach of the Messiah.—*Schürer*, 580. *Schleiermacher's Predigten*, ii. 69.

[q] In verse 27, "What ye hear in the ears" refers to the habit of the Rabbi in his chair whispering into the ear of the interpreter, who repeated in a loud voice what he had thus received.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 187.

"The housetops," which are flat, are still used for public announcements. It was from a housetop that the trumpet was sounded each Friday evening, to announce the approach of the Sabbath.—*Hor. Heb.* ii. 173. *Land and Book*, 40, 41. *Dach, in Bibel Lex.*, i. 555.

A passage in the Talmud is a fine illustration of verse 29. Simon, the son of Jochai, once stood at the entrance of the cave in which he concealed himself from his enemies during the persecutions, for thirteen years. As he did so, he noticed a birdcatcher who was watching a bird. Suddenly, however, the Bath Kol sounded from heaven "Have pity," and the bird escaped. Then the Rabbi cried out—"If even a bird is not taken without the will of God, how much less a man!"—*Bereshith Rab.* f. 88, c. 4.

Sparrows, that is, finches generally, are still sold for eating, in strings, at a very cheap rate.—*Tristram*, 161, 201. *Land and Book*, 43. *Godwyn*, 264.

[r] Anointing with oil was a practice among Jewish physicians. R. Simeon Ben Eliezer says, "R. Meir permitted the mingling of wine and oil, and to *anoint* the sick on the Sabbath. But when he once was sick, and we would do the same to him, he would not allow it."—*Talmud in Hor. Heb.* ii. 415. This explains James v. 14. In the miracles it stands on a similar footing with Christ's anointing the eyes of the blind with clay, &c. It could not in itself cure, in many cases, but the supernatural grace imparted with it secured the desired result. The Jews anointed the head with oil for the headache.—*Pliny*, 23, 38. Oil is still used in the East for boils, &c.—*Rusegger's Travels*, i. 247.

[s] A denarius or penny was worth about 7½d., but its purchasing value was equal, apparently, to about forty pence now.—*Dr. Davidson, New Test.*, xlvi.

[t] πρασιαὶ, πρασιαὶ—areolatim. The prasiai are the square garden plots in which herbs are grown. St. Mark, who used the word, doubtless expresses the feelings of St. Peter as an eye-witness. One in the Talmud, speaking of barley bread, says, "There is a fine crop of barley." Another answers, "Tell this to the horses and asses." A Roman soldier, who had quitted his ranks, had for part of his punishment that he received barley bread instead of wheaten.—*Suetonius*, *August.* 24.

[u] The *Mischna* speaks of the usual blessing of bread and fish, but says that the blessing for the former was omitted when the latter was salt fish, because the bread was regarded as an appendix to the fish. The blessing was therefore asked only on the salt fish! The Talmud says, "It is forbidden to take food into the mouth without having previously thanked God for it as His gift."—*Berachoth*, f. 35. 1.

Jesus asked Philip about supplying the multitude. "Perhaps," says Bengel, "he had charge of providing for the daily wants of the disciples and of Jesus."

Lücke (*Commentar*, ii. 62) says, "There can be no doubt that both expressions 'to bless' and 'to give thanks' were the usual terms for the 'grace' common among the Jews." The formula is given in full, Acts xxvii. 35. εὐχαρίστησε τῷ θεῷ—και κλάσας—"He took bread and *gave thanks to God*, and *when he had broken it*." See also Pressel's *Leben Jesu*, 136.

In John vi. 16, it is said that "when even was come the disciples went down unto the sea." In the other Gospels, however, evening is spoken of as having already come, or being near, before the multitude was fed. The explanation is that while John has followed the usual Greek mode of speaking, the others make use of the Hebrew, or rather the Pharisaic way of reckoning the day. By this, there were two evenings: the first corresponding to our afternoon, from three to six, the other from six to nine, after which came "the darkness."—*Lücke*, ii. 66. *De Wette*, *Archäologie*, 214. *not. d.*

[x] The Roman satirists note this wallet or basket as a characteristic of the Jews.—*Juvenal Sat.*, iii. 14; vi. 541. It was of osiers or twigs—"virgulta." Luthardt (*Das. Joh. Evangelium*, ii. 44) finds in the twelve basketsfull one for each apostle, a mystical reference to the twelve tribes of the ancient Israel and to the future of the new Israel! The "baskets" were specially designed to provide the Jew with Levitically clean food, when travelling through Samaria, or in heathen parts.—*Wahl, Clavis*, 278. b.

[y] οὐ γὰρ συνῆκαν—"they considered not;" rather, did not understand—comprehend. πεπωρωμένη—"hardened;" rather "dull, stupid."

---

## CHAPTER XLIV.

[a] The Jerus. Talmud (*Sanhed.*, f. 18) asks "What is the seal of God?" R. Bibai, in the name of R. Reuben, answers, "The Truth" (אמת). "But who is the Truth?" R. Bon says, "The Living God, the Eternal King." R. Lakisch notes that in אמת (the Truth), א is the first letter of the alphabet, מ the middle one, and ת the last, which, therefore, means "I, Jehovah, WAS the First; besides me there IS no God, and I SHALL, also, BE the Last."

Had Jesus any allusion to such a meaning of the expression, "*sealed*," &c., since it was current in His day? Comp. John xiv. 6.

ἐσφράγισεν—esphragisen—sealed, attested, confirmed, established, as men do in the East, by affixing a seal. The writing of a document may be done by any one; the seal affixed is the mark of authenticity. This is still the universal custom in all written transactions.—*Lane's Modern Egyptians*, i. 35, 36. *Perkins' Persia*, 421. *Narrative of a Mission*, 256.

[b] ὁ καταβαίνων—refers to ὁ αρτος. It is wrongly applied to Jesus in the English version. It is not "he," but "it" in our idiom.

[c] Both the word בָּשָׂר (Bashar) flesh, and אָכַל (Achal) to eat, were familiar as figures to Christ's hearers, even in the Scriptures. "To eat my flesh" (Ps. xxvii. 2) was a metaphor for fierce and cruel enemies thirsting for one's blood. The fool devoured with envy is said (Eccl. iv. 5) to eat his own flesh. Oppressive rulers were said, in Ps. xiv. 4, Prov. xxx. 14, Hab. iii. 15, "to eat up, or devour, the people." So Mic. iii. 3.

[d] I have put together the meanings attached to the expression by different expositors, ancient and modern.

[e] ἐκ τούτου. So De Wette and Lücke. But Meyer, "on this account," viz., the discourse.

[f] This is the true reading, as shown by B, C,* D, L, Nonn. Cosm., and received by Griesbach, Lachmann, and Tischendorf.

The Holy One of God is equivalent to "Him consecrated by God." See John x. 36. 1 John ii. 20. Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34. Acts iv. 27. Rev. iii. 7. Langen points out

(*Judenthum*, 413) that this is in reality the same name as "The Elect One," so frequently used of the Messiah in the Book of Enoch—for ὁ ἅγιος (ho hagios) stands for ὁ ἡγιασμένος—ho hēgiasmenos, the sanctified one, or "Him set apart"—in John x. 36. To sanctify or to set apart for Himself, and to choose for Himself, thus spoken of God, are identical conceptions.

[g] The quantity named was 40 seah—and the Rabbis give the seah at nearly a gallon and a half.—*Weights and Measures. Dicty. of the Bible.*

[h] Corban—קָרְבָּן, from Carab קרב "he drew near" (God),—was the Hebrew word for anything vowed and presented to God as an offering or sacred gift. Jewish creditors were quick-witted enough to turn the "corban" to a good account, by frightening payment from their debtors by the statement that the money owed was "corban."—*Winer, Darlehen.*

[i] This is involved in the Hebrew word כָּבֵד (Kabad).

---

## CHAPTER XLV.

[a] ἐξελθοῦσα—exelthousa. In Mark vii. 24, the words "and Sidon" are rejected by Tischendorf. Phenicia is from φοῖνιξ a palm—the country of palms. *Elsey* (i. 265), makes it from αἱμάξαι, an ancient Greek verb, to slay, to murder—a meaning apt enough, as the early Phenicians were the pirates of the Mediterranean. See Mommsen's *Geschichte, passim.* But the simpler etymology seems the better, and has its analogue in the "Morea" from μαῦρος (mauros), a mulberry.

[b] ψιχιόν—psichion—dim. from ψίξ psix—a fragment of bread, flesh, &c.—*Passow.*

[c] Tradition makes the name of the woman Justa, and that of her daughter Berenice, and adds that her husband repudiated both her and her daughter for their faith in Jesus. —*Sepp*, iv. 201. Canaanite meant originally a "lowlander," but it came to mean "a merchant," from the commercial fame of the Phenicians.

The Talmud has copied the incident of the "children's crumbs," and used it of a supplicant for grain in a time of famine.—*Nork*, 75. *Sepp*, iv. 197.

Pressel's commentary on the woman's words is fine.—*Leben Jesu*, 174. So, also, as usual, is that of Hess.—*Leben Jesu*, i. 412.

[d] This is the meaning of the word κυλλούς, translated in our version, maimed. Tischendorf rejects it on the authority of the Sinaitic version, but Scrivener retains it.

[e] σπυρίδας—spuridas. The spuris only is mentioned in this case, instead of the cophinus of the former miraculous feeding. Both were small baskets, of which every Jew of the humbler class seems to have carried one for his provisions, &c. See p. 632.

[f] Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles read Magadan, a name which is not otherwise known.

Mark gives the name of Dalmanutha—"the shady place"—but this also is unknown.

[g] Manasseh obtained from Sanballat permission to build a rival temple at Shechem. Menelaus was a time-serving friend of Greek customs and of the Syrian kings. Onias built a rival temple in Egypt.

[h] The Pharisees as a body were poor, and lived with a modest simplicity, often earning their bread by a laborious occupation. The Sadducees were spoiled children of fortune. Yet Pharisees were not wanting whose epicureanism rivalled anything said of their rivals. "Eat and drink, for the world we are soon to leave is like a marriage feast," said Samuel to Rabbi Jehuda Chimona. "My son," said Rab. to R. Hamenuna, "if you have anything, make merry, for there is no more pleasure under the ground, and death gives no respite. Do you intend to leave money to your son? Who will tell you about it when you are in the grave? Men are like the flowers of the field: those of to-day give place to those of to-morrow." These are sayings of two famous Rabbis of the Pharisaic party.—*Derenbourg*, 131, 132.

[i] The south wind is the Samūm or Simoom, which blows from the hot deserts of Africa, and brings overpowering heat. It blows up the gorge of the Jordan, and sweeps like a furnace-blast over the plains of Gennesareth. The west wind brings the clouds from the Mediterranean. The east wind from the table-land of the Hauran brings dry weather.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

[a] Cheselden, in his account of the restoration of sight by an operation to a youth who had been born blind, says, "When he first saw he knew not the shape of anything, nor any one thing from another, however different in shape or magnitude; but, being told what things were, whose forms he before knew from feeling, he would carefully observe that he might know them again."—*Anatomy*, p. 301. 1768, London.

[b] Tischendorf, following the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., omits the last clause of the verse. Meyer retains it.

[c] The Jews expected the reappearance not only of Enoch and Elias, but also of Moses and Jeremiah. Moses was believed to have been taken to heaven like Elijah.—*Jos. Ant.* iv. 8. 48; i. 3. 4; ix. 2. 2. I have quoted (page 384, vol. i.) the legend (2 Macc. ii. 1) elsewhere, of the concealment of the ark by Jeremiah at the taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans.

A similar legend rose in the Christian Church respecting Joseph. He died, it was said, but his body was not allowed to see corruption, and he would be raised again at the marriage supper of the thousand-year reign. He would have been carried to heaven in a chariot of fire, like Elijah, but died as a tribute to original sin, derived from Adam.—*Hist. Jos.* 26. 28.

See Langen's *Judenthum*, 491, 493. Godwyn's *Aaron and Moses*, 38.

[d] εκκλησία—ecclesia. The word comes from the verb ἐκκαλέω—to call out—to call together, and is equivalent to the Heb. קָהָל—Kahal—"congregation," "assembly."—Judges xxi. 8. 1 Chron. xxix. 1. 2 Chron. xxiii. 3. Ex. xvi. 2. In Acts xix. 32, 39, it is translated "assembly."

[e] That Peter was the rock on which the Church was to be built up, see Bruch, *Bib. Lex.* v. 55. Meyer, *in loc.* Holtzmann, *Bib. Lex.* iv. 482. Pressel, 181. Hoss, ii. 103. Ewald, v. 461.

Paulus (ii. 2) paraphrases the words thus—"Thou art a true Peter—a rock-like man—to Me! and on this rock, upon the foundation held so firmly by thee,—that I am the true Messiah,—on the rock of thy confession will I build up those called from the world to be my spiritual Temple. With this I lay on thee a great office. Thou shalt be, in that spiritual Temple-palace, the keeper of the keys, who admits those allowed to enter. Lead in as such, the worthy, who are fit for the heaven-like kingdom. A great task will, however, lie on thee in this matter. Thou shalt diligently explain to men what the divine commands forbid or permit. And know thou that what thou, here below, declarest permitted, must be of that nature only which is permitted in heaven, where the will of God reigns supreme."

[f] "To bind and loose," as shown by a great many illustrations in Lightfoot's *Hor. Heb.*, ii. 238—241, was a phrase of every-day use among the Jews, for forbidding or permitting. It was, in fact, the common expression for the decisions of the Rabbis on any of the countless points submitted to them. They "bound"—forbade—this; and "loosed"—permitted—that. Doors, in antiquity, were fastened by cords, in tying and loosing which keys were used. Hence, instead of speaking, as we do, of opening and shutting a door, they spoke of binding and loosing it.

[g] Dr. Aug. Wünsche has published a series of extracts from the Rabbis, under the name of "Die Leiden des Messias" (Leipsig, 1870), to show that they taught the doctrine of a suffering Messiah; but it is certain that the traces of their having done so are indecisive. This is my opinion, at least, after having read the book.

[h] ἵλεώς σοι, sc. ἔστω ὁ θεός—God be *merciful to thee*—God forgive thee—Be it far from thee.

---

## CHAPTER XLVII.

[a] The appearance of Moses at the coming of the Messiah was taught by the Rabbis. "God, the Ever-Blessed, said, 'O Moses, as thou gavest thy life when thou wert alive for Israel, so, also, in the times of the Messiah, when I shall send Elijah the prophet to them, you also, shall come, at the same time.'"—*Debarim Rabba*, § 3, 255. 2.

[b] The Rabbis had disfigured and distorted the Scripture record of revelations by the voice of God, from heaven. They spoke of a "BATH KOL—the daughter—or Echo—of

the voice (of God). "From the time that Haggai, Zacharias, and Malachi died," says the Talmud, "the Holy Spirit was taken away from Israel. Nevertheless, the Bath Kol was granted. For, once, when the Rabbis were consulting in the chamber of the house of Gorijah, the Bath Kol came from heaven and said, 'There is a man among you who is worthy that the divine majesty should rest on him, but the age is unworthy of him.' Then the eyes of all were turned on Hillel, the old, whom, when he died, they mourned as a holy man, and a true scholar of Ezra." So, at the choice of R. Samuel. Many more details are given in Buxtorf, 320—322. See also Reland's *Antiquitates Sac. Heb.*, 259.

[c] "With tears" is wanting in A* B, C* & Δ, and several versions, and is therefore rejected by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles. "Lord" is, in the same way, wanting in the Sinaitic, Vatican, Alexandrine, and other MSS., and is also rejected by the same authorities.

[d] σπαράξας—"tore" means not only "rending," but "convulsing." The word is used four times in the New Testament. In Mark i. 26, Schleusner translates the passage "et totum ejus corpus convulsit et distorsit"—"and convulsed and distorted his whole frame."

In the present passage the Vulgate translates it "conturbavit eum." In verse 20 it is translated "tare," and so in the fourth instance, in Luke ix. 39. But in all these cases "convulsed" is the true meaning.

[e] Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles, on the authority of the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., and of many versions, read ὀλιγοπιστιαν, instead of ἀπιστιαν. But Meyer and De Wette retain the latter. I have incorporated both.

[f] It was a familiar expression among the Jews for an eminent Rabbi that he was a "rooter up, or a remover of mountains." One was called so from his skill in clearing up difficulties; another, from "his piercing judgment;" of a third, who taught in the streets of Tiberias, it was said, there was no such "rooter up of mountains" in his day as he.—*Lightfoot*, *Hor. Heb.* ii. 283.

The grain of mustard seed was another proverbial expression, for exceeding minuteness.

[g] Tischendorf omits "and fasting," but Meyer, De Wette, Messner, and others retain it.

[h] παρέπορεύοντο διὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

[a] From שָׁלַח—to send. The Jews called the messengers Shelihim: the Hellenists—Jews of foreign birth—used the Greek equivalent ἀπόστολοί—apostoloi.

Buxtorf translates שָׁלִיחַ—Sheliach (the singular of Shelihim) as a Nuncius, or apostle—that is, a messenger of the Sanhedrim. The word was also used for an ecclesiastical servant who helped Levites, Priests, or the Head of the Synagogue, and also as the verger or caretaker of the Synagogue, 2411.

[b] The aggregate from the whole world may be judged from the fact, that the contributions from the Jews in Babylon alone had to be guarded across the desert by a force numbering thousands, for fear of the Parthians.

[c] The plural "sons" is used by Jesus as identifying Himself with His disciples in ordinary conversation, but the *application* can only be made to Jesus, not to Peter, for Jesus alone was "the Son of God" in the sense implied in the argument. Curiously, this passage is used by the Roman Church to support the immunity of the clergy, as descended from Peter, from all taxation, or at least from ecclesiastical taxes.

[d] There had been a fierce controversy between the Sadducees and the Pharisees about the didrachma. The Sadducees contended, from the words of the Law, Numbers xxviii. 4, that the daily morning and evening offerings should be paid from free contributions; not from the Temple treasure. The Pharisees, on the other hand, likewise appealed to the Law, to prove that these offerings were the concern of the people as a whole. They carried their point, and instituted a special Temple tax—the tax now demanded. To mark their victory, they would receive no coin except the old half-shekel of Simon the Maccabee (*Dicty. of the Bible*, ii. 410), which flattered the national feeling as a Jewish silver coin—the only silver coin, indeed, struck in their long national history. See, also, Jost, i. 217, 218.

Wieseler (*Beiträge*, 104—126) has a learned chapter in which he urges that the tax demanded was the Roman poll-tax.

[e] A *stater* was four drachmas, and it is very noteworthy that we know from other sources, that at this period it was almost the only Greek imperial coin in circulation in the East, the didrachma being probably unknown, or very little coined.

[f] διάκονος (diaconos)—the deacon. It means in the New Testament—1st. A slave who waits at table.—Matt. xxii. 13. 2nd. One whose services are used by or for another—the magistrate (for God). 3rd. Ministers as diaconoi of God and of Christ. Men who serve the will of the devil.—Rom. xiii. 4. 1 Cor. iii. 1. 2 Cor. xi. 15. 4th. "Deacons" in the early Church.

[g] When Jesus elsewhere says, "He who is not with me is against me, and he who gathers not with me scatters abroad," it is no contradiction to the opposite-sounding words, "He who is not against me is for me. That was spoken of His deadly enemies; *this*, of His friends.

[h] μύλος ὀνικὸς (mulos onikos), a mill-stone turned by an ass. It was much larger and heavier than the stones of hand mills.—*Furrer*, 122. *Buxtorf*, 2252. This was not a Jewish punishment (*Land and Book*, 642), but it was in use among the Greeks, Romans, Syrians, and Phenicians.—*Casaub. ad Suet. Oct.*, 67, quoted by Meyer.

[i] Amidst the countless explanations of this difficult passage, I have given what seems to me most in keeping with the context.

[k] The next verse, the 12th of Matt. xviii. is wanting in B. L.* 1.* 13, 33, and many versions, and is omitted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles. Some such words, however, being necessary to maintain the connection of the text, I have used them.

[l] The simple rules of discipline instituted by Jesus were, apparently, those already in practice in the synagogues. Even at this day it is required, on the day before the great Day of Atonement, that Israelites who have a difference seek reconciliation. The *offender*, not as in Christ's case the *injured*, is to go to him whom he has wronged, and seek forgiveness. If not thus obtained, he is to take three persons with him, and go again. If the injured person will not, after all, forgive, the contrite offender is to take with him ten persons—reckoned "a congregation," or, in our use of the Greek word "ecclesia," which is the equivalent of the Hebrew "congregation"—"a church," and in their presence say—"Sirs, I have wronged this person, and now implore his pardon and forgiveness." If the offended one still refuse to forgive, the witnesses are to hold the offender clear in the sight of God and man.—*Mills' Jews*, 170. See, also, Nork, 81.

The promise of Jesus to be with any two or three of His Apostles gathered in His name, must have sounded to the Apostles as a direct claim of supreme divinity, for it was an assumption for Himself of what the Rabbis taught as one of the special characteristics of God, in His relations to Israel. Where two or three sit together, said they, and read the Law, the Shechina is amongst them.—*Nork*, 81. *Gfrörer*, i. 303

[m] Over two millions pounds sterling. An Attic talent was equal to about £216. That such a defalcation was possible, shows what the condition of the oppressed nationalities at that time was. The rapacity of Roman governors, in almost all cases, may be illustrated by that of Q. Metellus Scipio, Proconsul of Syria, B.C. 49—48, as painted by Cæsar.—*Bell. Civ.*, iii. 32.

"Meanwhile, the moneys demanded were sternly exacted from the whole province, and many additional ways of gratifying rapacity were invented. A head tax was levied on all slaves and freemen. Doors and columns were taxed, and other imposts were demanded in corn, or as soldier money, or for arms; boatmen, engines of war, and conveyances were requisitioned. If a new tax could be thought of, it was at once imposed. Military governors were put not only in cities, but almost in each village and mansion, and he was thought the best man, and the best citizen, who used his position most harshly and remorselessly. The province was full of lictors and officials, and swarmed with prefects and tax-collectors, who added to the taxes for their private gain, pretending that, being exiled from home and country, they needed to do so—thus covering dishonest acts by a fair excuse. Besides this, heavy usury was added to all the taxes, as generally happens in war. Such a state of things can be only equalled now, by the government or misgovernment of the Christian states subject to Turkey, as enumerated in the following official declaration (1876):—

1. The small farmer complains that he has to give half his produce to the aga, or mayor; that the aga pays him four visits a year, and he has to maintain him and his followers while they remain.

2. The tithes are farmed, and the farmers exact ten times the amount prescribed by Law.

3. The rayahs have also to pay taxes and personal contributions.

4. The cattle are counted in an iniquitous manner.

5. A Christian prosecuted by a Turk, or who prosecutes a Turk, loses his suit unless he has two Turkish witnesses, and is thrown into prison.

6. The Turks employ violence, carry off wives and daughters, and force them to embrace Islamism.

7. If a Christian calls for justice against a Turk, he is sure not to live more than three days.

8. The Turks hate our priests, churches, &c.

9. We pay taxes and receive no education; we have no schools.

10. The rayah is obliged to work on roads for a week at a time, without pay or food.

11. When horses are required for the army the rayah has his animals taken.

12. We cannot obtain justice in a court composed of savage Turks and only two Christians, who are forced to consent even to the death of the most honest Christians.

13. If a poor Christian resists forced labour, or interferes to prevent his horse being taken, he is sure to be beaten almost to death.

14. If a Christian take a case into court, he can never get it settled without bribing the judges to ten times the value of the matter in dispute.

15. There is no security under the Turkish Government.

16. If an aga come to see you, he blasphemes against the Cross, &c.

17. A Turkish judge obliged some rayahs to dry a lake for him.

18. There is no probity in the Turkish Government; its agents, being ill-paid, commit illegal and violent acts.

19. Turkish, which the rayahs do not understand, is used in the courts.

20. Some rayahs drained a lake, and the Turks took the land reclaimed away from them.

Substitute Roman for Turk, and you have Judea in the days of Christ.

[n] Even among the Hebrews this could be done.—2 Kings iv. 1. The debts of Christ's age were sometimes enormous. Thus, Cæsar owed 25,000,000 sestercii = £285,000 beyond his assets. Mark Antony, at the age of twenty-four, 6,000,000 sestercii = £69,000, and fourteen years later 40,000,000 sestercii = £450,000. Curio owed 60,000,000 sestercii = £675,000, Milo 70,000,000 sestercii = £825,000. It was a time of universal corruption, the highest classes spending on political bribery as much as they could in any way get, to secure consulships, &c., by which, through the plunder of their governments, they might amass stupendous fortunes. The lower classes catching the infection, were equally unprincipled, and the result was the vanishing of capital, the depreciation of real estate, countless bankruptcies, and an almost universal insolvency at every political crisis. It was a frequent spectacle to see debtors pass into the position of dependents on their creditor; the humbler ones following in his train like slaves; the greater ones watching, even in the Senate, his nod or wink, to speak and vote as he wished.—*Mommsen's Röm. Gesch.*, iii. 511.

"If a debtor failed to discharge his liabilities to the State, he himself, and all that he had, were at once sold, without any legal process: it was enough to prove the debt, that the State claimed it."

In private debts—if payment were not duly made, "the king handed over the debtor to the creditor, who could lead him off, and hold him as a slave. After sixty days, during which the debtor was exposed thrice in the market-place, to see if any one would take pity on him, the creditor had the right to put him to death, and cut his body in pieces, or to sell him, with his children and all he had, into slavery to another State, or to hold him as his own slave. Creditors had, moreover, private dungeons, which were no better than living graves, and in these they often shut up their debtors for life.—*Mommsen*, i. 156. 162. Things were only too much the same in Christ's day.

---

## CHAPTER XLIX.

[a] The words (Luke ix. 54) "as Elias did," are not in the Sinaitic or Vatican MSS. The fifty-fifth verse from "and said," and the whole of the fifty-sixth verse, are wanting in A. B. C. E. G. H. L. S. V. X., and many versions. They are therefore rejected by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

[b] *δια μέσον Σαμαρίας και Γαλιλαίας*—between the two countries, with Samaria on the south and Galilee on the north.

[c] A striking illustration of the intense hatred between the Pharisees and Sadducees, was shown in the reign of Alexander Jannæus (B.C. 105—78). As one of the Asmonæan line, Alexander was high priest as well as king, and being a Sadducee in feeling, on one occasion ostentatiously poured the water brought daily from Siloam during the Feast of Tabernacles, on the earth, beside the altar, instead of upon it, as the Pharisees, that is, the Rabbis, enjoined. Instantly the attendant priests, and the multitude around,

launched the citrons in their hands at his head. Enraged at the insult, Jannæus called in his soldiers, and slew several thousands of the rioters. This was only one instance of the bitterness of the feud between Sadducee and Pharisee. On another occasion Jannæus crucified 800 of the latter.—*Derenbourg*, 98, 99.

[d] Lightfoot's account is picturesque. "At the close of the first day of the feast, they went down into the court of the women, and there prepared a great stage, the upper part of it for the women, the lower, for men. There were golden lamps there, fixed to the wall, with cups of gold, below each of which four ladders were now set. Four young priests forthwith ascended with bottles of oil containing 120 logs (pints), which were emptied into the golden cup. Wicks had been made from the old linen robes of the priests, and there was not a street in Jerusalem that did not shine with the lights."

"The religious and devout danced before the lamps, torch in hand, singing hymns and doxologies. The Levites, with harps, cymbals, and other instruments, stood on the fifteen steps leading to the court of the men and sang. Two priests standing at the gate at the top of the steps, now advanced, sounding brave flourishes, ever and anon, till they reached the east gate of the Temple," &c.—Quoted by Lightfoot (iii. 312), from *Succah* c. 5. *hal.* 2.

[e] The Jews settled in foreign countries, were divided by their countrymen in Palestine into two great classes. The Jews of Babylon—a general name given to all Israelites settled in the East; and the "dispersed among the Gentiles"—ἡ διασπορὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων—the Greek-speaking Jews, living in Egypt, Asia Minor, and other countries west of Palestine. Is this an incidental proof that our Lord spoke Greek as fluently and commonly as the Syro-Chaldaic dialect?

[f] The last day of the feast was called Hoshanna Rabba.—The great Hosanna. The word Hosanna is made up of the two words, הוֹשִׁיעָה—Hōshia, "save," and נָא—na, "now;"—and "the great Hosanna" is thus equivalent to the great day of prayer, because it was specially devoted to prayer for the salvation of the whole people and the remission of their sins, and for their welfare through the year, which began with the month Tisri. The prayers at the feast generally, were hence called Hosanna, and even the Lulabs and willows borne by the pilgrims got the same name, from their bearers shouting the word from time to time as they went along.—*Buxtorf, Lex.*, 993.

The last day of the feast was especially great as that on which, as the Rabbis taught, God made known by the look of the moon and of its rays His judgment respecting the future of each individual during the new year then just opened, and how each had been regarded by Him on the Day of Atonement in reference to the sins of the year past. Long details are given in the Talmud, of the astrological signs by which the pardon and future lot of individuals might be read from the heavens on this night.

It was held, also, that God fixed on this day how much rain was to fall in the coming year—which was tantamount to decreeing barrenness or fertility.

Superstition thus largely increased the popular excitement as the feast closed. See on this whole subject, Buxtorf, *Syn. Judaica*, 446—470.

[g] In the Book Sohar we find the same metaphor, fol. 40, col. 4, "When a man turns to God he becomes like a spring of fresh living water, and streams flow out from him to all men."

---

## CHAPTER L.

[a] The narrative of the woman taken in adultery (John viii. 1—11) is not found in some of the MSS., but it was circulated in various texts as early, perhaps, as the second, certainly as the third, century. There can be no doubt that it is a genuine fragment of evangelical history, derived from some source which we do not now exactly know, and there needs be no hesitation in adopting it as the narrative of an incident in the life of Jesus. For a full statement of the overwhelming evidence in its favour, I would refer to the remarks of Meyer (*Evan. d. Johann.*, 273, 274), and of Lücke and Rosenmüller, *in loc.* It is useless to trouble the reader with dry details.

[b] "LIGHT is the name of the Messiah."—*Talmud, in Nork*, 177. See, also, *Bibel Lex.*, iv. 15.

[c] The middle-age book Sohar, has a similar expression. He who gives himself to the understanding of the Law is a free man.—*On Numbers*, fol. 73. 291.

[d] "Thou art a Cuthite (a heathen from Cuth)," said R. Nachmann to a Samaritan—"no one among us would believe you as a witness in any matter."—*Jevahoth*, f. 47. 1.

## CHAPTER LI

[a] Ewald and others have supposed that Martha was the widow of Simon the Leper (Matt. xxvi. 6). Others, that Simon was her relation or friend (Grotius, Kuinoel, Ebrard). Others, again, that he was the owner, and main tenant of the house. But all these conjectures are arbitrary and unsupported.

[b] προσκυνεῖν—(to worship) is used by John only of worship of the divine being, iv. 20; xii. 20.

---

## CHAPTER LII.

[a] It had been instituted by Judas Maccabæus, in B.C. 164, after his great victories, and was celebrated by illuminations in every Jewish household in the land, in commemoration, it was said, of the legendary finding, at the first celebration, of a bottle of the old holy oil, which had miraculously sufficed for the whole week's demands—though it is more easy to think of such a display as the natural expression of universal joy. The Temple and every private house in Jerusalem were lighted up, within and without, by lanterns and torches, every evening during the eight days; the front of the Temple was decked with crowns of gold and golden shields; no fast or mourning was allowed, and the crowds moved about in all the variety of Oriental gala dress, bearing branches of palms and other trees, and ever and anon filling the air with their songs and rejoicings.

[b] So, in B. L. X. and many versions. Adopted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

[c] "συνέδριον—σύν together—ἕδρα, a seat—an assembly, a sitting together."

[d] Dr. Thomson has an illustration of the ideas even now in force among the Jews as to Sabbath observance. "A Jew must not carry on the Sabbath even so much as a pocket handkerchief, except within the walls of his city. If there are no walls it follows, according to their perverse logic, that he must not carry it at all. To avoid this difficulty here, in Safed, they resort to what they call Eruv. Poles are set up at the end of the streets, and *strings* stretched from one to the other. These strings represent a wall, and a conscientious Jew may carry his handkerchief anywhere within them. I was once amused by a devout Israelite who was walking with me, on his Sabbath, toward that grove of olive-trees on the north of the town, where my tent was pitched. When we came to the end of the street the string was gone; and so, by another fiction, he supposed he was at liberty to go on without reference to what was in his pocket, because *he had not passed the wall.*

"A profane and most quarrelsome fellow once handed me his watch to wind just after sunset on Friday evening. It was now his Sabbath, and he could not work."—*Land and Book*, 275, 276.

[e] Son—not ass: υἱὸς—not ὄνος.—Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Meyer.

---

## CHAPTER LIII.

[a] The drachma, in circulation in Palestine, was either the Grecian, which was worth 7½d., or the Phenician, which was worth something less.

[b] In the vivid words of St. Luke, they "turned up their noses" at Him ἐκμυκτηρίζειν.

[c] Michaelis (*Ein. in die Schr. des N. B.* 2 Th. p. 1186) says, "The narrative of the rich man is not a mere moral invention, but refers personally to the family of Hannas, the high priest, and his five sons. For the rich man with his five brothers, who, like himself, believed neither Moses nor the prophets, and, as it seems, had no fear of the world to come, can scarcely fail to be recognized in Jewish history, if one think of Caiaphas, the son in-law of Hannas, and on the five sons of Hannas (*Ant. Jos.* xx. 1) who in succession held the office of high priest, but were, notwithstanding, all of them Sadducees." Striking, if it be so, that Jesus, in this parable, thus judged His future judge before the great day!

[d] ζητήσουσιν—"seek" is a weaker word than ἀγωνίζεσθε—"strive."

## CHAPTER LIV.

[a] ὑποπιαζω—hypopiadzo — fr. ὑπο—under—ὤψ—ōps—the eye—to hit under the eye —to give a black eye. The Vulgate has "sugillet"—to beat black and blue. Luther has "übertäuben"—to talk one deaf.

[b] The words ἐκ νεότητός μου—"from my youth up"—are not in the best MSS. and are disallowed by Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

[c] Buxtorf (p. 1722) quotes a proverb of the Rabbis which compares an impossibility to an elephant entering the eye of a needle. See striking illustration in Furrer, 298. It is also noticed in Dukes, 119.

[d] The Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. omit "for them that trust in riches." Lachmann and Tregelles retain these words. Tischendorf omits them.

[e] διάκονος—diaconos—servant, minister—is intensified in the next line to δοῦλος—doulos—slave.

[f] θεῖον χώριον.—*Josephus.*

[g] Bar—Timæus. Bar, בַּר—son. Timæus was a Greek name, though father and son were evidently Jews. The father must have been afterwards known as a Christian to cause his name to have been given.

[h] A mina (or pound) was equal to 100 drachmæ. Each of these was nominally worth $7\frac{1}{2}$d., but its purchasing value was equal to perhaps 3s. 4d. of our money. The sum given would, thus, be about £3 2s. 6d., though, in reality, it was of as much value then as about £17. See *Dicty. of Bible* (*Weights and Measures*), and *Robinson's Lexicon* (*Art.* μνᾶ).

---

## CHAPTER LV.

[a] The Rabbis, in their extravagance, maintained that the Messiah would ride on the same ass as carried the wood of Isaac's sacrifice, which, itself, was the foal of the ass created at the beginning of the world. See Eisenmenger, ii. 697.

[b] Quoted as usual from the Greek. I give Augusti and De Wette's translation.

[c] Βηθανία—Bethany—בֵּית הִינֵי. Bethphage—בֵּית פַּגָּא or בֵּית פַּג. The פַּג (Pag) is the unripe fig which hangs on the tree over winter.—Cant. ii. 13. There are three kinds of figs in Palestine:—

1. The early fig. The Bekurah (Bikurim, the first-fruits בִּכּוּרִים). After a gentle winter it ripens at the end of June, but, perhaps earlier, round Jerusalem.
2. The summer fig (Kermûs—Arab.).
   It ripens in August, and is dried and made into cakes, &c., to preserve it. It forms the main crop.
3. The Pag (The winter fig, or unripe fig). It ripens only after the leaves have fallen, and after gentle winters hangs on the tree till next spring.—Winer, *Real W. B.*, *Art.* "Feigenbaum." Tobler, *Denkblätter, aus Jerus.* 101—103. Ewald, v. 523. Bleek, 312. *Land and Book*, 349. Tristram, 352.

[d] Force of the word used, λικμάω.

---

## CHAPTER LVI.

[a] Tischendorf rejects the words "and with all the soul." Lachmann puts them in brackets.

## CHAPTER LVII.

[a] The *lepton* was the eighth of an *as;* the *as*, the tenth part of a denarius.

[b] At that time wars will rise on the earth; nation will be against nation and city against city; many troubles shall come on the enemies of Israel.—*Sohar Chadash*, f. 8. 4.

If thou seest kingdoms rising against kingdoms, then watch and look for the footstep of the Messiah.—*Beresch. Rabba*, 42 f. 41. 1.

[c] Deceitful and designing men, under the pretence of inspiration, plotted innovations and revolutions in the government of the country, and misled the multitude, till they got them worked up to behave like madmen.—*Joseph. Bell. Jud.*, ii. 13. 4.

[d] "Hic locus est, partes ubi se via findit in ambas
Dextera, quæ Ditis magni sub mœnia tendit;
Hac iter Elysium nobis: at læva malorum
Exercet pœnas, et ad impia Tartara mittit."
—*Virg. Æn.* vi. 542—545.

---

## CHAPTER LVIII.

[a] Three hundred pence is the very sum stated by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xii. 12). At six times their nominal value in that day, which would, perhaps, be near their equivalent now, three hundred pence would be equal to about £60.—*Lightfoot, Hor. Heb.* ii. 448. *Winer, Art.* "Narde."

[b] *γινομένου*—in B. L. X., &c., adopted by Tischendorf and Tregelles. The present participle harmonizes the account with that of the other Evangelists.

[c] Charoseth—חֲ־רֹסֶת—was a dish composed of dates, figs, &c., of a brick colour, to remind them of the bricks and mortar of Egypt. Buxtorf says it was of dry dates, or figs, or dried grapes, and the like, pounded and made up with vinegar, &c.—*Lex.Talm.* 831. The dish itself (*τρυβλίον*) was for liquids, and held about half a pint.—*Dicty. of Antiquities.*

---

## CHAPTER LIX.

[a] "Ter limen tetigi, ter sum revocatus; et ipse
Indulgens animo pes mihi tardus erat.
Sæpe, valedicto, rursus sum multa locutus,
Sæpe eadem mandata dedi."—*Ovid, Trist.* i. 3. 55 f.

[b] The Greek words translated in our version "because I go to the Father," are omitted by Tischendorf and Tregelles. They are wanting in B. D. L. and in many versions.

---

## CHAPTER LX.

[a] If the name Zion be correctly given to the hill west of Moriah. Lieut. Conder thinks it was a hill one and three quarter miles west from the Jaffa gate.—*Pal. Repts., January*, 1877, p. 21.

Dean Stanley, also, has questioned the correctness of the present use of the name.

[b] A cohort was 500 men. A "band"—possibly a maniple, the third of the cohort though the name is sometimes given to even a smaller number,—is named by St. John, xviii. 3.

A chiliarch—the title used by St. John—is the Greek equivalent of a "tribune of the soldiers"—tribunus militum. It means, literally "the commander of a thousand." There were six in a legion of from five to six thousand men, so that a chiliarch or tribune was equivalent to our lieutenant-colonel.

It is to be noted, however, that the word σπεῖρα (speira) translated "a band" in our version is generally used as the equivalent of the term "cohort," so that it is not impossible that a large force was sent to Gethsemane, under a superior officer, in case of an attempt at rescue. See *Dict. of Antiquities*, *Art.* "Exercitus." Also Wahl, Schleusner, and Robinson's Lexicons of the Greek Test.

---

## CHAPTER LXI.

[a] So translated in the Vulgate, in Luther's German version, and in Davidson's Tischendorf. Even in the translation used in our own version, however, it is the common Rabbinical form of clear affirmation. The Divine Majesty is spoken of by Jesus as "The Power"—an abstraction current among the Rabbis, and seen, yet, in the Talmud.—*Buxt. Lex.* 385.

---

## CHAPTER LXII.

[a] There is thought to be a difficulty in connection with John's words (xviii. 28), which seem as if the Passover had not yet come. The fullest and best discussion of the point, so far as I have seen, is that in McClellan's New Testament, 486, ff. (Macmillan, 1875). Strange to say, Paulus (iii. 220) takes the view I have given, though Meyer and De Wette, not to mention Alford, and Canon Westcott, think the Passover was yet future. The old Law required those who were to partake of a feast to be Levitically clean for three days before, but the three days had been latterly shortened to one.—*Ewald's Alterthümer*, 143. *Luthardt's Evan. Joh.* ii. 392.

[b] Herod raised his "judgment seat" in the theatre.—*Jos. Ant.* xvii. 6. 3. Philip, on the highways.—xviii. 4. 6. Agrippa I. before the people.—Acts xii. 4. Pilate, in the circus.—*Bell. Jud.* ii. 9. 3. Florus, before the palace, in Jerusalem.—ii. 14. 8.

[c] From גַּבְּתָא—a hill.—*Buxt.* 377. Compare our English word, gibbous—convex, hump-backed. The name "Pavement" λιθόστρωτον—was a tesselated pavement of different colours, on which Roman prætors and procurators had their Bema (βῆμα), or official chair, as judges, set. Cæsar carried with him, on his campaigns, such a pavement.

[d] The word is λαμπρός—which is translated in our version—here (Luke xxiii. 11), *gorgeous*. Of angels' robes and of the morning star (Acts x. 30. Rev. xxii. 16), *bright*. James ii. 2, *goodly* apparel. James ii. 3, *gay* clothing. Rev. xv. 6; xix. 8, *white* linen. Rev. xviii. 14, *goodly* fruits. Rev. xxii. 1, *clear* as crystal.

[e] Bar Abbas. The Son of a Father, *i.e.*, of a Rabbi.

[f] In the Vatican and corrected Sinaitic—the word ἐκδύσαντες—stripped—put off—is rightly changed into ἐνδύσαντες—clothed—put on. He had been entirely stripped, to be scourged.

[g] Matthew (xxvii. 45), Mark (xv. 25), and Luke (xxiii. 44) agree in saying that it was the third hour (from 6 a.m.) when Jesus was finally given up for execution. John, on the other hand (xix. 14) says it was about the sixth hour (12 noon). But without any laboured theory about difference of calculation, how easily, as Lücke remarks (ii. 488), might the Greek numeral Γ (γ')=3 have been changed by accident into Σ (ς')=6—in the MSS. of John's Gospel, from which ours have been copied. But even this is not needed, for as Ewald (v. 574) points out, John likely speaks of the time of the actual nailing to the cross, the other evangelists of the starting to it. The preparations, the march, &c., &c., may well have taken up the interval till noon.

---

## CHAPTER LXIII.

[a] In Acts i. 18, it is said that Judas bought the field: in Matthew, that the priests bought it. The apparent difficulty is simply a mistranslation of the word—ἐκτήσατο—in Acts. Schleusner (*Lex.*) and Rosenmüller (*Scholia*—Acts i. 18) rightly explain it as

meaning "Judas, by his unholy reward, afforded the means of buying the spot. Schleusner quotes an apt illustration from Josephus.—*Ant. Jud.* ix. 8. 3.

[b] (The Jews) first put the condemned person to death, and then hanged him on a tree, but the custom of the (Roman) Empire is first to hang (crucify) them, and then put them to death.—*Sanhed. in Gemara*, quoted by Lightfoot, ii. 365.

[c] *Quinct. Decl.*, 274. Thus, when we crucify criminals, the most frequented roads are selected, where the multitude may see everything, and be struck with fright at the lesson. See, also, Matt. xxvii. 39.

[d] Hase and Meyer distrust the proofs of any covering, and the Fathers, Athanasius, Ambrose, and Origen, speak of entire nudity. The body-cloth seems to have been restricted to inflictions of death by the Jews. The Romans had no such tenderness. Polycarp was martyred entirely naked.—*Eus.* iv. 5. The soldiers would hardly lose any part of their perquisites of the clothes for the sake of delicacy. The Jews, like the Romans, stripped those about to be put to death; but the Mischna prescribes that a person crucified, is to wear a cloth round his loins.—*Sepp*, vi. 330. Schenkel (306) thinks that Jesus was stripped entirely naked. Hug, quoted by Winer, was of Sepp's opinion.—*Kreuzigung, R. W. B.* Keim (iii. 415) also thinks crucified persons were stripped entirely naked.

[e] The triple inscription on the Cross was, probably, very nearly as under. The Aramaic—JESUS, THE NAZARENE, KING OF THE JEWS. The Greek—THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. The Latin—THE KING OF THE JEWS.

ישוע הנצרי מלך היהודים

Ουτος εστιν Ιησους ο βασιλευς των Ιουδαιων.

Rex Judæorum.

[f] It is impossible to know in what sense our Lord used this word. The dying thief, however, would doubtless understand it in the sense in which his nation then used it.

[g] It is impossible to explain the origin of this darkness. The Passover moon was then at the full, so that it could not have been an eclipse. The earlier Fathers, relying on a notice of an eclipse that seemed to coincide in time, though it really did not, fancied that the darkness was caused by it, but incorrectly. Paulus thinks it was the darkness preceding an earthquake. Meyer, that it was supernatural.

[h] For אֵלִי—He uses the Aramaic אֱלָהִי For עֲזַבְתָּנִי—the Aramaic שְׁבַקְתַּנִי

[i] Dr. Walshe, quoted by Sir James Y. Simpson, in *Hanna*, 337. See, also, Sepp, vi. 394. Ewald's *Geschichte*, v. 584. Stroud on *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, London 1847, pp. 94 ff, and 399 ff.

[k] בֵּית עוֹלָמוֹ—Baith Olamo—his everlasting house.—Eccles. xii. 5. חַיֵּי עוֹלָם—everlasting life.—Dan. xii. 2.

---

## CHAPTER LXIV.

[a] The words "and of a honey-comb" are omitted by Tischendorf and Lachmann, and put in brackets by Tregelles.

# INDEX.

D

E



F

I



J

K



L

M

Q



R

S

T

U



V



W

# INDEX OF TEXTS.

## OLD TESTAMENT.

# APOCRYPHA.



# NEW TESTAMENT.

PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON